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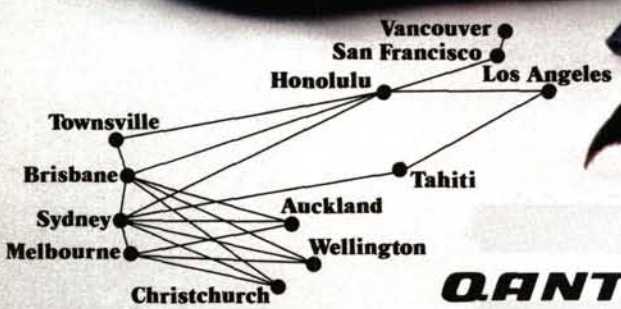

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CORRESPONDENCE

CENSORSHIP CONTROVERSIES

To the editors:

Joseph Nocera's otherwise even-handed article, "The Big Book-Banning Brawl" (TNR, September 13), misinformed readers that a speech I gave was a "First Amendment piece" and inferred that labels were painted with a broad brush. Alas, he careened from my context by a kilometer!

My remarks to the American Library Association reaffirmed the significance of librarians and sought to *unify* liberals and conservatives on the need to protect American freedoms. I explored far-rightist perceptions and censorship and drew from studies of extremism, intolerance, and authoritarianism.

Studies from the social sciences about political extremism must, of course, be placed in perspective. Such research is important, however, for it helps us to understand some of the censorship controversies in our nation. To dismiss such research as "arrogant dime-store psychology" did little to help. Such fulminations only serve to leave us floundering in the quicksand of our preconceived bias.

J. CHARLES PARK
University of Wisconsin
Whitewater, Wisconsin

To the editors:

As a librarian, I take issue with the conclusions of Joseph Nocera's article on book censorship. He calls for compromise in cases where there are "conflicts over differing values and differing perceptions." It seems to me he has lost the point of First Amendment protection. These differing values and perceptions are just the ones which are the hardest to protect. It is usually a small minority whose values are being attacked. Unpopular ideas do deserve protection.

Mr. Nocera blandly overlooks the library's responsibility to try to meet the needs of all its users—students with a broad spectrum of interest and abilities, including interests in values or perceptions different from the majority. Library books are not like assigned texts. They are chosen by the borrower—and I do not think anyone should decide for others what they should not read. With censorship attempts up 300 percent in the last two years, now is not the time to compromise.

GORDON J. SUITS
Santa Rosa, California

BLOOM'S BUBER

To the editors:

In his enthusiasm for portraying his own journey from Martin Buber to Gershom Scholem and for giving his personal view of modern Jewish culture, Harold Bloom allows several serious distortions of fact or context to enter into his review of my book, *Martin Buber's Life and Work: The Early Years—1878-1923* (TNR, July 19 & 26). He offers, as "the *definitive* Jewish judgment" on Buber, Franz Kafka's remark, "No matter what he says, something is missing." This remark, which I quoted in my book, comes from a letter Kafka wrote to his fiancée in 1913, when Buber was only thirty-five years old. Bloom not only fails to mention the purely private nature of this statement, he also leaves out what Kafka wrote to his fiancée three days later, a statement I quote on the next page of my book: "Yesterday I also spoke with Buber who is personally fresh and simple and significant and seems to have nothing to do with the lukewarm things that he has written."

A second serious distortion of context is Bloom's depiction of Buber's wife Paula simply as "a Catholic," which might lead readers to imagine that she was and remained a believing and practicing Catholic during her more than *fifty years of marriage to Buber. In fact,* she was an enthusiastic "PhiloZionist," whose writings were published by Theodor Herzl in his journal *Die Welt* before she married Buber, and when she married she converted to Judaism.

Perhaps the strangest thing about Bloom's review is the amount of attention he gives to Scholem's critique of Buber, since this critique and Buber's reply to it belong to Buber's later years. They are, in fact, dealt with in full in *Martin Buber's Life and Work: The Later Years—1945-1965,* to be published in the fall of 1983 or spring 1984. That Scholem attacks Buber's admittedly one-sided interpretation of Hasidism does

continued on page 39

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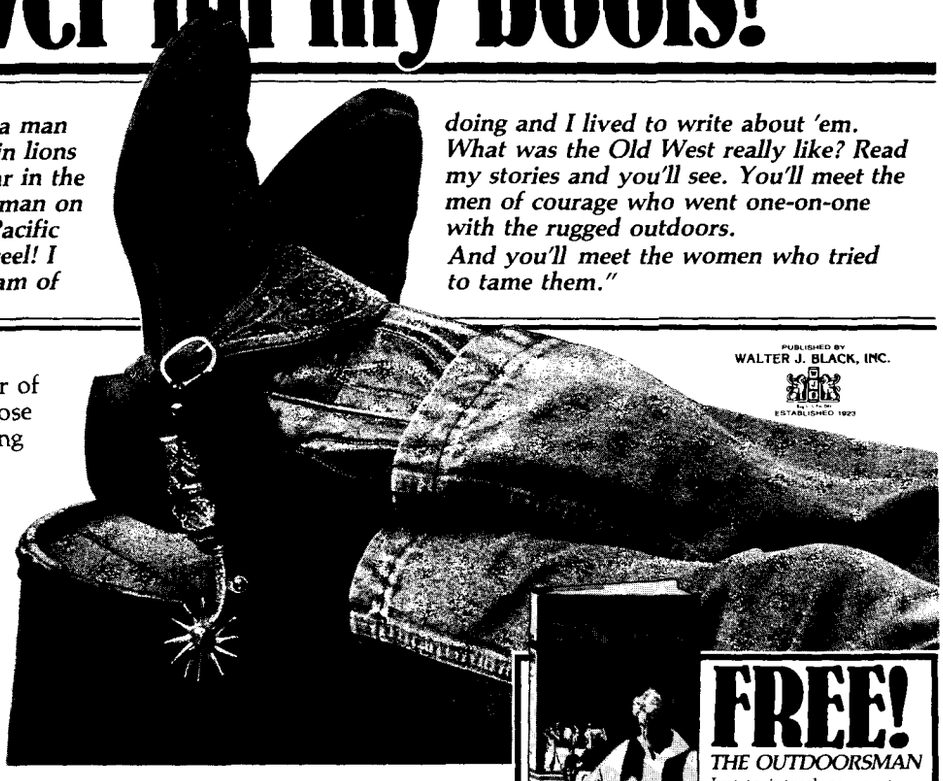

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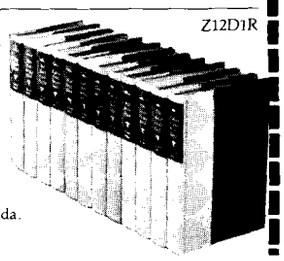

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FROM WASHINGTON

Adventure In Socialism

I know where I was fifty years ago. I was on the prairie fairgrounds in McCook, Nebraska, looking off at the most brilliant sunset I had ever seen. The hushed tones of a couple of speakers caught the awesome feeling of the sky. One of them was F.D.R. (who was running for President), and the other, the saintly Senator George Norris, backer of the proposed Tennessee Valley Authority. Norris was a Republican but eulogized Roosevelt nevertheless. The subject was public versus private initiative and power. At 71, Norris seemed practically in the grave to a young reporter. He was simple in his tastes; in his thirty years in Washington, he never acquired a dinner jacket. He was no great orator. What was the secret of his power? I don't know. He had overthrown dictatorial rule by the Speaker of the House, and now in the Senate he was working for improvement of the lot of the common man. He had a cherubic face, arched eyebrows, and a perpetual look of surprise and wistfulness. Governor Roosevelt venerated him. They were taking turns denouncing the "power trust." About 16,000 people listened to them in a kind of amen mood. The two made the pledge that produced TVA and America's great adventure in socialism (that hated word!). Yes, I remember the date. It was September 28, 1932. Overhead the sky throbbed and pulsed.

I am reminded of it now and then. The other day Ronald Reagan spoke at the National Black Republican Council dinner and told them that they "would be appreciably better off today . . . if the Great Society had never been inaugurated." "Perhaps unintentionally," he continued, "many government programs have been designed not to create social mobility and help the needy along their way, but instead, to foster a state of dependency."

Ah, well; fifty years ago I heard the clerk in Congress read the Hoover veto of the latest Muscle Shoals bill, which George Norris had gotten passed. (An earlier one was vetoed by Coolidge.) Muscle Shoals, you recall, was pushed by Wilson in World War I as a project for extracting nitrates and harnessing the rapids. Within 37 miles the riverbed of Muscle Shoals dropped 137 feet and engineers saw the torrential energy not merely wasted but causing horrifying annual floods in a penniless area where many still lit homes with kerosene lamps. Norris went up to see how they did it in Canada under the government-run hydro program. He found that the family with whom he stayed used 334 kilowatt hours of electricity at a total cost of $3.25; he found the same power in Nashville, Tennessee, cost $40. The Hoover veto of Norris's proposed TVA program on March 3, 1931, in tone and content, anticipates Ronald Reagan. Hoover shudders at creeping socialism: "I hate to contemplate the future of our institutions, of our country," he says, "if the preoccupation of its officials is to be no longer the promotion of justice and equal opportunity, but is to be devoted to barter and the market. This is not liberalism, it is degeneration." Yes, and it is not merely Hooverism but the complaint we so often hear again today.

A Brookings study released that year on the distribution of wealth in America indicates that 1 percent of the people owned 59 percent of the national wealth. At the other end of the scale 87 percent of the people owned 8 percent of the wealth. The rich-poor gap has diminished since then, and the crevices are plugged by a lot of social legislation that disturbs President Reagan. The tendency to abandon self-reliance upset the doomed Herbert Hoover, too. He was a sincere, earnest, good man. And here he was hit by a crash in the stock market which obviously sooner or later would come to an end, if it hadn't already. What was this lightweight governor of New York thinking about? One of F.D.R.'s supporters, Stuart Chase, had written an article for the THE NEW REPUBLIC, urging public planning under a catchy title, "A New Deal for America." The phrase handily fused Teddy Roosevelt's Square Deal and Wilson's New Freedom. Roosevelt bellowed it out: the New Deal.

We thought about those things at the fairgrounds in McCook, Nebraska, fifty years ago. Hoover stood for the steadfast verities: "I am firmly opposed to the government entering any business the major purpose of which is competition with our citizens," he said in his Muscle Shoals veto. This bill, he added, "raises one of the important issues of federal government ownership and operation of power and manufacturing business not as a minor product but as a major purpose."

What should we think? Where would the government stop? They would have social support programs for unemployment next! What would this unknown governor of New York propose? He stood there with Norris, the cherub-faced maverick with the black bow tie, and called him "the very perfect gentle knight of American progressive ideals," which sounded flattering and high-toned. And he was elected, of course.

Even while unpacking in the White House, F.D.R. sent a note to Norris saying that as soon as the "rush of emergency legislation is over," he hoped to talk about the Tennessee Basin development. F.D.R. signed the new TVA bill on May 18, 1933. It was the kind of thing to justify Reagan's worst fears. It was, in short, socialism. It provided an autonomous government development plan for an area three-fourths the size of England. It provided a complex, unprecedented plan to rehabilitate the whole run-down Tennessee Valley under the auspices of a public corporation. It involved twenty-eight dams. In short, those liberals who so perplex and anger Hoover and Reagan took over.

Socialism? My authority is *The Growth of the American Republic* by distinguished historians Samuel E. Morison and Henry Steele Commager: The TVA, they say, marked "an almost complete reversal in policy and political philosophy" from Hoover's. "The change involved . . . a candid acceptance of socialism in the realm of public utilities and a commitment to the experiment of a planned economy."

We wondered about it fifty years ago, under the sunset, in McCook, Nebraska.

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THE NEW REPUBLIC
OCTOBER 11, 1982

THE HORROR IN BEIRUT

The slaughter of Sabra and Shatila fills us with revulsion. It is a monstrous crime in an age of monstrous crimes. Hundreds of innocents were gunned down by Christian militiamen because they were Palestinians. Those Christians of Lebanon deserve the outrage of the world. But not only the Christians. Israel's government was responsible for the safety of the miserable people of these camps; it had made itself responsible when it took over West Beirut the day before. The blood that the Christians spilled stains Israel, too.

The massacre was a wild orgy of random killing and a systematic execution of entire families. Survivors identified the killers as members of the *Kateb*, the Arabic word for Phalange, followers of the assassinated President-elect of Lebanon, Bashir Gamayel. There is some evidence that it was carried out by the so-called Damouri Brigade, a highly trained Phalange unit made up of survivors of Damour, a Christian town whose inhabitants were slaughtered by Palestinians in 1976. There are other reports that soldiers of Saad Haddad, whose Christian militia in the south is closely allied with Israel, may also have been involved. If these reports are true, then it appears that the murder of Palestinians may be the one thing the Phalange and Haddad's men can agree on, divided as they are by bitter enmity.

Enmity appears to be the only enduring relationship Lebanese factions can establish with each other. As Nabih Beri, Lebanon's Shiite militia chief, explained: "When we deal with each other individually, we can be civilized; but when we deal with each other as groups, we are like savage tribes in the Middle Ages." The Beirut massacre is the latest in a series of internecine atrocities committed in Lebanon since the civil war began in 1975. It is not, in this sense, a world historical event. The terrible truth is that what happened last week was only the most recent murder in a culture of murders. Of course this does not lessen our horror. The sanctity of human life is a standard to which all men must be held. The regularity of violence and atrocity in the Arab world does not make the authors of this atrocity any less guilty. Innocents are entitled everywhere to protection.

The Christian militias of Lebanon are guilty. The Israelis, however, are partly responsible. It is the presence of the Israelis at the scene that has put these latest Lebanese killings on the front page. There is a double standard here, to be sure: when Israel was not involved, comparable events in Lebanon were not even reported. Some in the Middle East who now feign outrage actually think of massacre simply as a continuation of politics by other means. And, of course, Israel's Western critics will exploit the tragedy. While attacking Israel, they are already describing Amin Gemayel, the new leader of the Phalange, as a kind of dapper and moderate statesman. Still, this time Israel can't hide behind the hypocrisy of others. When Israel moved into West Beirut after the assassination of Gemayel, it assumed responsibility for protecting its populace. And an enormous responsibility it was. The Lebanese Army, for all the ceremony with which it moved about West Beirut, was a paper force that disappeared at the first signs of trouble. The Mirabitoun and other private Moslem militias had effective control of West Beirut. The Phalangists controlling Christian East Beirut were enraged by the assassination of their chief and scores of his top advisers in the bombing of their headquarters earlier in the week. The situation was explosive. For seven years, they had been waiting to resume the civil war. Israel moved into West Beirut in part to prevent that from happening. In the areas which Israel occupied, it succeeded; it disarmed the Mirabitoun and other militias and restored a semblance of order to West Beirut. And then it let the war resume.

But it did not enter the Palestinian camps. It surrounded them and either sent in or let in Christian militiamen. The Israeli intention was to achieve a second goal: the removal of PLO men who remained in the area in violation of the Habib agreement for the

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evacuation of the city. The Israelis were ruthlessly determined to dot the i's and cross the t's of Operation Peace in Galilee. But they did not enter the Palestinian camps. They allowed their allies, the Christians, to go into Sabra and Shatila. The Phalangists, however, had their own work to do. They went in simply to kill.

The Israeli decision to allow the Christians into the camps was a moral, political, and military enormity. This decision, which must have been taken at the highest level of the Israeli command, is difficult to understand. Israelis do not butcher civilians. That is known even to the Palestinians, who fled to Israeli lines outside the camps for protection. ABC News reported that the survivors of the massacre pleaded with the Israelis not to leave them under the supervision of the Lebanese Army, since, as ABC pointed out, the Israelis were the only people the Palestinians could trust to protect them.

And yet the Israelis let the murderers in. How could they have allowed this? The Israeli chief of staff, General Rafael Eytan said simply, "We do not give the Phalangists orders and we are not responsible for them." An Israeli official told reporters after the massacre, "We have warned them more than once in the past that they should not engage at all in vendettas." Perhaps the Israeli commanders who let the Phalangists into Sabra and Shatila warned them once again. Perhaps they thought that with this warning they had discharged their duty. Then they looked away.

THE ISRAELIS know who and what the Christians are. They know how they fight. They also know the bitter history of warfare in Lebanon, the endless stream of atrocities that have occurred in the last seven years, one used to justify another. All summer the Israelis have berated the media for ignoring scores of thousands of deaths in the years that preceded Operation Peace in Galilee, but now they ignore this themselves. They know that in Lebanon revenge is a sacred duty, and that the custom is to exact it by killing in numbers. *The Washington Post* reports that Sulieman Franjieh, former President of Lebanon and leader of a rival Maronite Christian faction, whose son and family and followers were slaughtered by Bashir Gemayel's militia in 1978, received the news of Gemayel's assassination as "an agreeable surprise." But, he said, "Unhappily, I was not responsible for his death." Franjieh explained that vengeance must be wrought personally. These are Christians talking about Christians. We can only imagine the depths of hatred among Christians, Lebanese Moslems, and Palestinians, the major actors in the seven-year civil war. But the Israelis, indifferent or impatient, could not.

It is true that Israel did not start these blood feuds. But by occupying West Beirut, Israel took upon itself the responsibility to control new outbreaks. Furthermore, by making an alliance with some of many murderous factions in the Lebanese civil war, it ran the risk of being associated with, however indirectly, the appalling brutality that has characterized for a decade this inter-Arab struggle.

There is no wiping away the moral stain—a stain which may prove very deep. According to Israeli press reports, Israel was guilty of more than sins of omission. Israeli authorities in the area of the atrocity may have known about it as early as Friday morning—a full day before it ended. What they did then, or did not do, must be fully established. A commission of inquiry must be created to establish the truth about Israeli complicity. Those military and political leaders responsible for doing nothing must suffer the full consequences of that commission's conclusions.

Whether or not they knew about the Beirut killing as it was going on and did nothing, those responsible for the terrible decision to allow the Phalange into the Palestinian camps must resign. Israel's honor and conscience demand no less. That includes Prime Minister Begin. His refusal to accept even indirect responsibility for what occurred in the camps compounds the tragedy. He has responded in his usual truculent manner, and in the process has debased yet another sacred symbol of Jewish history. He accuses those who find Israel somehow responsible for the massacre as guilty of "blood libel." Blood libel—the accusation that Jews killed Christians for ritual purposes—is one of history's most grotesque and murderous examples of scapegoating Jews. The crime alleged was pure fiction. The Beirut massacre was not fiction. Begin's government allowed it to happen. This man has lost all moral credibility. He can no longer speak for Israel's soul. Begin did not kill the poor people in those camps, but he is killing his own people's dream.

The campaign in Lebanon aimed at expelling the PLO was largely successful, and, we believe, justified. For that, Begin and Defense Minister Sharon have reaped political rewards. But they simply did not know how to stop, and the Beirut massacre was also a result of their campaign. It came from a fanatical attempt to root out the last PLO stragglers remaining in the godforsaken Palestinian camps. The decision to allow the Phalange in, with its history of vendettas and less than a week after the murder of its leader, appalls.

When a crime of this magnitude is committed during one's watch, one is honor-bound to resign. That is not only our view, it is the view of a large segment of a shocked, outraged, and remorseful Israeli society. It is also the view of many leading Israeli newspapers, including some on the political right normally sympathetic to the Begin government. This week we write not in praise of Israel, but in praise of its shame. We hope that the Prime Minister will see what he has done to the Jewish state, and for its sake step aside. Not only to allow those with a more humane and clear vision of Israel's purpose to take over, but also to tell the world that Israel will not allow itself to be led anymore by those who led it to the killing ground.

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Break The Clinch

When your Representative or Senator comes back home, ask how he or she voted on Clinch River. Votes are coming up at the end of September on this fattest and sloppiest of all pork barrel measures. The cost for the nuclear breeder reactor itself is $4 billion (exceeding the original estimate by more then $3 billion), but the real purchase price will be much greater. To win votes for this unnecessary, though jobs-rich, project for Tennessee, Senate Majority Leader Howard Baker has to trade promises to support any number of equally wasteful projects in other states. Though the Reagan Administration is penny-pinching when it comes to social programs, it supports Clinch River (over objections from budget director David Stockman) because it needs Baker's help in the Senate. Democrats ought to be stalwart in their resistance, but when the House last voted on Clinch in July 1981, party leaders (Jim Wright, Tom Foley, Dan Rostenkowski, Jamie Whitten, J.J. Pickle, Tony Coelho) supported the project. When the Senate voted to support the project last December, Democrats generally opposed it. But some of the Senate's better Republicans voted with Baker, including Bob Dole, Mac Mathias, Bob Packwood, Arlen Specter, and Robert Stafford. A coalition of liberal Democrats and hardline fiscal conservatives in both Houses is fighting Clinch again this time, including Gary Hart and Gordon Humphrey in the Senate and Richard Ottinger and Claudine Schneider in the House. They don't agree on much at other times, but they smell pork this time and their noses aren't deceiving them.

Except for providing 4,000 jobs in Tennessee and sustaining the political power of Senator Baker, there is practically nothing to recommend Clinch River. The project was conceived when it was thought the United States would consume vast quantities of uranium per year and therefore would need breeder reactors, which produce more fuel than they consume. But technical, political, and economic factors all have worked to dramatically reduce the demand for uranium. Instead of the 1,000 or 2,000 power reactors that the United States government expected to be in operation by the end of this century, there will be no more than 170. The Department of Energy's research advisory board called in 1981 for deferral of the reactor because of its "low-urgency, low-economic potential, low benefit-to-cost ratio," and said the United States now has sufficient uranium reserves for at least forty years.

There are also reasons to oppose Clinch River in the name of nuclear nonproliferation. The fuel that breeder reactors use and produce is plutonium, the stuff of atom bombs. The U.S. ought to be doing all it can to limit the amount of plutonium in the world, but the Administration's support of Clinch instead tells other countries that this country regards plutonium as the way of the future.

If nuclear power were a fledgling industry with great promise, we would not oppose some government subsidy for it. We do not entirely agree with David Stockman's original argument against Clinch—that "continuing massive subsidies for the project is totally incompatible with our free-market approach to energy policy. Today it is the nuclear breeder lobby looking for a large, uneconomic subsidy. Tomorrow it will be the solar-power gang, then the windmill freaks, and so on in a never-ending stream of out-stretched palms." We do not believe in a completely free-market energy policy, especially when it comes to research and development. The Reagan Administration doesn't believe in the free market either—though it pretends to. But instead of giving start-up money to see if solar, wind, and biomass energy will work, the Administration has slashed all those programs and given more to nuclear. It's time for that to stop.

Notebook

□ "YOU HOLD IN your hands what could become the most exciting magazine in America, the new *Conservative Digest*," begins a squib in the monthly published by Richard Viguerie, the right-wing mail-order mogul. Fans of the old *Conservative Digest* will be relieved to hear that despite its spiffy new graphics, the magazine is as boneheaded as ever. For example, in an article accusing the professional football players' union of promoting socialism (never mind how), one Mark Huber writes: "Ed Garvey, the executive director of the National Football League Players Association . . . describes himself as a progressive Democrat and was once president of the extreme leftist National Students Association (NSA). The NSA was an offshoot of the communist-dominated World Student Congress." Now, let's see. In 1961 and 1962, Mr. Garvey was president of the National Student (not Students) Association. The NSA was founded in 1948 precisely to combat Communist influence in international student politics. It took admirably liberal stands on issues (pro-integration, anti-HUAC, anticolonial), but calling it "an offshoot of the communist-dominated World Student Congress" is like calling NATO an offshoot of the Warsaw Pact. Mr. Garvey later became secretary-general of the International Student Conference, a federation of national student unions organized expressly to do battle with the Soviet-controlled International Union of Students (the World Student Congress was the IUS's biennial jamboree). Throughout his career as a student leader, by the way, Mr. Garvey was an agent of

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the CIA, which underwrote the budgets of both the NSA and the International Student Conference. He's not a spook anymore. He is a progressive Democrat, though. *Conservative Digest* always gets its man.

□ SCANNING THE SEPTEMBER *Forbes* list of America's super-rich, we find that oil, especially Hunt oil, is still the surest way to wealth. Ten of thirteen billionaires on the list got their principal pile from petroleum, and five of them were sired by the legendary H.L. Hunt. Among the other notables: Yoko Ono, widow of John "Imagine No Possessions" Lennon; mobster Meyer Lansky (who says crime doesn't pay?); and publisher Malcolm Forbes himself. The point behind all this? *Forbes* bemoans the unflattering myths, "twisted for use by politicians hunting more tax dollars to spend," which sometimes circulate about the rich. The introduction to the list reads like a supply-side Nicene Creed: "Philanthropy is 'in' among the very wealthy. But most of it [their money] is reinvested, either in their existing businesses, or stocks or bonds, or in new ventures. The main thing they do, then, is create jobs and ever more of the goods and services needed to sustain the average man's lifestyle. . . ." Gee, thanks.

□ ON SEPTEMBER 16 WILLIAM SAFIRE attacked Shimon Peres for making a "tacit arrangement" with George Shultz to support the American proposals for peace in the Middle East. "It is political bad taste for any leader to campaign against his government's foreign policy overseas. . . . In the U.S. Yitzhak Rabin does not campaign against his government's policy." Neither does Shimon Peres. It was not Mr. Peres who came around, but Mr. Schultz. The American plan is Labor's plan; the support of Labor's leader required no "tacit arrangement." Mr. Safire was not only wrong; he was also a little sleazy. "Who promoted Peres?" he asked. The joke, which is not funny, may have been lost upon some of his readers. The reference is to Captain Irving Peress, the "pink army dentist" who came into Senator Joe McCarthy's sights in December 1953. A month after he refused to answer questions about his political convictions, the captain was promoted to major, according to the automatic provisions of the law. "Who promoted Peress?" became McCarthy's slogan. It appeared for a time on bumper stickers. Now it appears in the column of Mr. Safire, who uses language with care.

□ FIFTY YEARS AGO IN THE NEW REPUBLIC: "The truth is that a situation exists which is well calculated to take the heart out of a far bolder administration management than now exists. Quite obviously the Republican leaders are up against a tide created by the discontent and distress of the voters against which argument and reason are equally futile. The desire for a change seems general in the country. Whether it will be possible in four weeks to stem the tide or turn its direction remains to be seen. Not many of the supposedly 'trained observers,' as our traveling Washington correspondents like to call themselves in a campaign, think so. Very few Republican leaders who have been here to see the President are really hopeful. They await a political miracle with full knowledge that there has never been one yet." (TRB, "Washington Notes," October 12, 1932.)

Iran's misfit is dead.

WAYWARD REVOLUTIONARY

Paris

At dawn on Thursday, September 16, Sadegh Ghotbzadeh, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iran from 1979 to 1980, was executed. He was 46. The charge, to which he had publicly confessed: participating in a plot to overthrow the Islamic Republic of Iran, the republic he had spent years fighting to bring to power. The Iranian news agency quoted Ghotbzadeh as saying during his trial, "We wanted to topple the government but not Imam Khomeini. . . . I believe in him but not in the others who are ruining the country and Islam."

Like Iran's revolution, Ghotbzadeh's political life was filled with contradictions. Jimmy Carter recently praised Ghotbzadeh for working "heroically" to gain the release of the hostages. "I will always be indebted to him," said Carter, "as will the people of this nation." Yet many of Iran's leading moderates privately despised Ghotbzadeh as an arrogant opportunist who helped provoke the hostage crisis to begin with.

At one point there were charges in print that Ghotbzadeh, according to French intelligence, was an agent of the KGB. This was never confirmed, nor were the rumors, circulating at the same time, that he was in the pay of the CIA. And though Ghotbzadeh met his death at the guns of the Islamic Republic, he had also been targeted for assassination a few years earlier by the Savak, the Shah's secret police.

In 1977 I helped produce a report for CBS's "60 Minutes" about that plot. Ghotbzadeh at the time was living in Paris. He was the itinerant representative of the Ayatollah Khomeini, then in exile in Iraq and virtually unknown to non-Iranians, certainly to most Western reporters. Ghotbzadeh talked of the need for democratic reform and change in Iran. Khomeini would be the spiritual guide.

The last time I met Ghotbzadeh was in November 1980, at his spacious home in Tehran, just after he had been released from prison for publicly attacking the regime. He was wan and tired, but, as it later turned out, still involved in conspiracy. Khomeini, he said,

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had grown senile. He was completely out of touch with the acts being perpetrated in his name and with conditions in Iran. The big mistake of their revolutionary movement, he said, had been to believe Khomeini's promises (and their own) that once the revolution was successful, the Ayatollah would retire to the holy city of Qom, giving only occasional counsel to younger leaders like Ghotbzadeh, who would attend to the real business of reforming the country. Instead, Ghotbzadeh said, the adulation of the mobs and the power had gone to Khomeini's head.

Ghotbzadeh had left Iran in 1958 to study in Canada and in the U.S., at Georgetown University. He was a follower of the reformist, nationalist policies of Premier Mossadegh, who had been overthrown in a CIA-backed coup in 1953. In 1967, Ghotbzadeh met Khomeini in Iraq and later went to work for him as a kind of roving ambassador. He lived well, dressed immaculately, and was fluent in English and French.

Ghotbzadeh was certainly not just an opportunist. At a time when few gave Khomeini any chance of succeeding, Ghotbzadeh was traveling throughout the Middle East, Europe, and the U.S., trying to raise money and handing out mimeographed tracts to anyone who would bother to read them. Until the revolution finally began to catch fire, he would spend hours explaining to people why the regime of the Shah would fall. He was certain of it.

Yet, in October 1978, at a time when Iran did indeed seem to be coming apart, the political officer at the U.S. Embassy in Tehran, who was responsible for keeping track of the opposition, dismissed it as a "bunch of inexperienced yo-yos." Their movement, he insisted, was about to disintegrate. He had a point. That evening in Tehran I sat with a group of Iranians Ghotbzadeh had put me in contact with. They were university students and teachers, all claiming to support Khomeini's Islamic Republic. What exactly was an Islamic Republic? They spent hours discussing it. Under Islamic law, could banks charge interest? "No," said some. "We'll call it something else," said others. What should happen to a woman who refused to cover her head in public? Some suggested she should be left to do what she thought best. Others argued she should be judged and sent to prison. One young woman calmly stated that, if she persisted in her offense, she should be executed.

It was a strange alliance, ultimately doomed: Ghotbzadeh and other Western-educated reformers like Ibrahim Yazdi and Abulhassan Bani Sadr, filled with ideas of progress and change, linked to an aging Ayatollah, who preached a return to fundamentalist principles and seemed to pride himself on his almost total lack of knowledge of the Western world. The only thing all those who supported Khomeini had in common—the students, the workers, the businessmen, the mullahs, and men like Ghotbzadeh—was their opposition to the Shah.

During the hostage crisis, when Ghotbzadeh was Foreign Minister, he always managed to convey the impression to American reporters and negotiators that, like Bani Sadr and the other moderates, he realized the hostage-taking had been a tragic error imposed on the government by radical militants. Yet many of Iran's moderate leaders claimed it was Ghotbzadeh himself, as head of Iranian radio and television, when the hostage-taking took place, who had helped foment the crisis. His purpose: to undermine moderates like Bazargan and Yazdi in order to make way for himself.

But when he became Foreign Minister, Ghotbzadeh was unable to bridge the chasm between the militants, screaming for economic war against the U.S. and for public trials and executions, and those moderates who, though strongly anti-American, wanted above all to end the crisis.

In his new book, *Crisis*, Hamilton Jordan tells of an unidentified Iranian official who, during secret negotiations in Paris, suggested that, in exchange for the release of the hostages, the CIA should arrange to do away with the Shah, then living in Panama. Nothing bloody or violent—perhaps just a fatal injection, said the unidentified Iranian. Jordan now says it was Ghotbzadeh. He says he rejected the proposal out of hand.

THOUGH THE IDEA might have appeared outrageous to Jordan, it made eminent sense to Ghotbzadeh. President Carter had made it clear he could never force the Shah to return for trial in Tehran, one of the key conditions demanded by the Iranians for the hostages' release. At the same time, there was no way in which Iranian leaders like Ghotbzadeh could back away from such demands without, at the minimum, losing their jobs. What better solution than getting the CIA to quietly dispose of the problem?

Ghotbzadeh was devious, courageous, ambitious, and fatally naive. He never did fit in with the revolution. Even back in Iran, among the bearded mullahs and military-garbed radicals, he maintained his urbane ways, his European suits and ties. When he ran for President in January 1980, he received only a scattering of votes. A few months later, in a dramatic but futile gesture during a program on Iranian TV, he denounced the tightening dictatorship. Yet the moderates had earlier accused Ghotbzadeh himself of instituting rigid Islamic censorship when he ran Iranian radio and TV.

Immediately after that TV appearance, Ghotbzadeh was arrested and thrown in prison. He was held for a few days, then suddenly released. Afterward, in November 1980, I saw him at his home. It was Khomeini, he said, who had personally interceded on his behalf. Khomeini had always viewed him as something of a son. A few days later, though, Bani Sadr says he told Ghotbzadeh that it was he, his nemesis Bani Sadr, then President, who had persuaded the Ayatollah to order Ghotbzadeh released. Ghotbzadeh "was

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shocked when I told him that," says Bani Sadr.

Ghotbzadeh told me that Khomeini had warned him, once out of prison, to keep to his house and stop making political declarations. But rather than keeping quiet, or fleeing the country like Bani Sadr and many of the other moderates, Ghotbzadeh chose to remain and, almost out of habit it seemed, to plot the overthrow of the government. When friends asked him if he didn't fear the militants in power, he replied, "They're so stupid. They would never dare to do anything to me."

BARRY LANDO

Barry Lando, a producer for CBS's "Sixty Minutes," is based in Paris.

Bigness is beside the point.

MISSILE ENVY

FOR ARMCHAIR nuclear strategists, the beginning of strategic arms control talks on June 29 was like the opening day of the baseball season. Just as Dodger and Red Sox fans got out their scorebooks and eagerly compiled the box scores, so defense aficionados dusted off the old damage-probability slide rule and poised themselves to compute the latest nuclear exchange calculations. It was time again for CEPs, windows of vulnerability, and megaton ratios—and just seeing these familiar friends in print again set the adrenalin flowing.

During the SALT II summer of 1979, the lingo and arcana of the defense intelligentsia captured the imagination of the U.S. Senate and much of the Washington press corps. Perhaps the most popular character in that year's cast of concepts was "throw-weight." It was thus a great delight to learn that throw-weight will play a major role in the extended engagement of President Reagan's START talks as well. That portion of the President's proposal known as Phase II calls for setting the throw-weight of each side's strategic missile arsenal at four million pounds. The current throw-weight of the U.S. arsenal is 4.2 million pounds, while that of the Soviet Union is 11.2 million, meaning that the Soviets are expected to slim down by 62 percent, while the U.S. loses just 5 percent.

During the SALT II debate, Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, an opponent of the treaty, used to appear at hearings and on TV news programs with his models of American and Soviet ICBMs. First, he would show the Minuteman III, America's most modern missile—a tiny, shriveled-looking thing. Then he would show the Russians' SS-18—and all one could think was, "God, is it *big*!" The very sight of these models was enough to send shudders down the spine of any American, especially any American male. Snickering allusions to sexual metaphor are common in uneducated banter about missiles. However, the preoccupation with the size and throw-weight of Soviet ICBMs truly is a rare case where, even among many professional defense analysts, the psychosexual has overwhelmed the strategic. For upon scrutiny, throw-weight reveals very little about strategic strength or the balance of power.

Throw-weight is simply the weight, in gross pounds, of the top stage of a missile—the weight of goods that one side can "deliver" to the homeland of the other. This includes the weight of the nose cone, the re-entry vehicle, the computer guidance system, the mechanical gear, and, finally, the warheads. (Throw-weight, by the way, is not to be confused with "kilotons" or "megatons," which measure explosive blast. For example, a one-megaton bomb—whose missile might have a throw-weight of 2,000 pounds—releases the energy of one million tons of TNT.) Throw-weight made its debut in 1976, when, in an influential article in *Foreign Affairs*, senior statesman-strategist Paul H. Nitze, then of the Committee on the Present Danger, deemed it the most important indicator of the strategic balance. Aided by his technical assistant, T. K. Jones, who has since become known for his quaint views on civil defense, Mr. Nitze adduced that Soviet missiles were, in the aggregate, perilously heavier than ours. True, if you take a given missile and make it heavier, you can top it with warheads that are either more powerful or more numerous. But what does this mean for the balance of power, or for nuclear strategy?

IT IS INSTRUCTIVE to examine the case of the Minuteman III. A few years ago, the U.S. started to replace this missile's three MK-12 warheads with three newer MK-12As. This increased the Minuteman's throw-weight from 2,000 to 2,035 pounds—a difference of less than two percent. Yet it boosted the explosive power of each warhead from 170 to 335 kilotons—an increase in "megatonnage" of 97 percent. Thus there is less than a proportional relationship between throw-weight and destructive power. Or compare a Soviet and American missile. The Soviet SS-18's throw-weight is 16,000 pounds, against the proposed U.S. MX missile's 8,000 pounds. Yet both are designed to carry ten warheads, and both (theoretically) have the necessary combination of yield and accuracy to destroy such blast-resistant targets as missile silos. The SS-18 could be fitted with more than ten warheads if the Soviets so desired, but so could the MX. (One virtue of SALT II was that it prohibited the Soviets from doing so, thus preventing them from exploiting their vaunted throw-weight advantage.)

Yet even if there were a one-to-one correspondence

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between throw-weight and explosive power, it would still be close to meaningless in a serious assessment of the strategic balance. For the mission of nuclear weapons, if they are ever fired in anger, is not to destroy more square miles than the other side's missiles. Rather it is to destroy particular targets—factories, air bases, missile sites, command posts, weapon depots, ports, submarine pens, and so on. Against most of these targets, any nuclear weapon with an explosive punch of one hundred kilotons or so—and, in many cases, much less than that—could deal a devastating blow, as long as it landed not much more than a quarter-mile off target. Any explosion larger than that would be superfluous. Indeed, since the U.S. now emphasizes "selective-strike" strategies—destroying a particular target while doing minimal damage to the surrounding area—smaller bombs have a positive virtue, while larger bombs make such a strategy much more difficult to carry out.

The one exception to this principle is the category of very hardened targets, such as missile silos especially reinforced to resist blast. However, against these targets, throw-weight and megatonnage—beyond a certain point—are far less important than a missile's accuracy. In fact, improving accuracy by a factor of two will have the same effect as boosting explosive yield by a factor of eight.

As illustration, take once again the case of the SS-18 versus the MX. The latest version of the SS-18 carries ten 500-kiloton warheads; the MX will have ten 335-kiloton warheads. Yet to destroy an American ICBM silo with 90 percent confidence, an SS-18 would have to land within 500 feet of the target; the MX would have to land within 450 feet. In other words, a 11 percent edge in accuracy would compensate for a 50 percent disadvantage in megatonnage.

SOME ANALYSTS, among them former Secretary of Defense James R. Schlesinger, believe the ICBMs can never be as accurate as all that. Perhaps they might be, someday, over the testing ranges (they are not so accurate as yet). But the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. test their missiles on trajectories from east to west and west to east, respectively. In a real nuclear war, the missiles would fly over the North Pole, and would be subjected to a different and ultimately uncertain set of gravitational pulls, atmospheric anomalies, magnetic fields, and other influences that statisticians call "systematic and random biases." As Schlesinger has testified on several occasions, these real-war accuracies cannot be reliably inferred from the test-range accuracies.

This might suggest, at first glance, that the side with the bigger missiles has a significant advantage. But not really. If, say, each side's missiles can only be accurate enough to fall within 1,000 feet of the target, then each reliable SS-18 warhead would have a 50 percent chance of destroying an American missile silo, while the much smaller MX (or, for that matter, Minuteman III) warheads would each have a 45 percent chance—not much of a difference.

The point of all this is that against whatever target a nuclear weapon happens to be aimed, its throw-weight, beyond a certain point, will have little impact on the consequences. Thus, trying to frame an arms-control negotiation around the goal of equal throw-weight is an exercise in irrelevance.

THE DEGREE to which the Phase II proposal is stressed by our negotiators, then, will be an inverse measure of the Reagan Administration's seriousness about arms control. Few defense analysts of whatever persuasion would deny that if we insist on pressing throw-weight as an issue, the Russians will turn us down flatly. The reason is quite compelling from their point of view: Soviet missiles are designed in such a way that they have to be heavier than ours, even if their destructive power is exactly the same. The Soviets have not yet mastered the micro-miniaturization of computer technology; the guidance systems inside their missiles are much heavier than ours. The heat-absorbing substances protecting the nosecone as it re-enters the atmosphere, the mechanical wiring, *everything* about Soviet missiles is much heavier than American missiles, even if all other things are equal.

Not all of those who point to "throw-weight ratios" as the most important indicator of the strategic balance are being silly. Some of them are being quite crafty. They have a hidden agenda, which has little room for arms control but seeks to use arms control talks as another weapon in the propaganda campaign between East and West. The plan is to offer a proposal that the Russians turn down and then to rearm at breakneck pace, all the while sighing sympathetically with those who protest, patiently explaining that we gave the Russians a chance to prove their sincerity and they muffed it.

An intramural debate has reportedly developed between the State Department and the Pentagon over the terms of Reagan's START talks—State wishing to reduce the number of warheads, the Pentagon emphasizing throw-weight. While having all the appearances of a heated discourse among medieval theologians, the debate actually represents a much deeper political struggle—between those in power who see some value in arms control, if for no other reason than to exploit the popular passions of the nuclear-freeze movement, and those who want to kill off those passions altogether, to manipulate them and snuff them in the dirt. One indicator of who's winning that fight may lie in how stubbornly the American negotiators pursue the red herring of throw-weight.

FRED KAPLAN

Fred Kaplan is the author of a book on nuclear strategy and strategists to be published this spring.

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Pat Moynihan's resurgence.

Back To Liberalism

DANIEL PATRICK MOYNIHAN, the senior Democratic Senator from New York, never has been a dream candidate for liberals. He angered blacks with his alarming report in 1965 about the rising number of female-headed black families. He lost more friends with his decision to join the Nixon White House in 1969, and, a year later, with his leaked memo suggesting that "the time may have come when the issue of race could benefit from benign neglect." Then came his truculent performance at the United Nations from 1975 to 1976. And during all these years, Moynihan flaunted his neoconservatism menacingly, jabbing at liberals for their unworkable and failing domestic programs and for their foreign policy naiveté. All this formed the backdrop for his bruising Democratic primary fight in 1976 with Bella Abzug.

Moynihan won that fight and went to the Senate, but liberals were not quite ready to forgive. A full-throttle liberal challenge seemed certain in the Democratic primary this year. Worse, even if Moynihan managed to stagger through the primary, he was likely to face an aggressive Republican opponent, lavishly financed and prepared to label Moynihan a dangerous leftist. But this scenario never materialized. Instead, Moynihan and his talented political aide, Timothy Russert, carried off a remarkable turnaround that has shifted Moynihan from a top spot on the political endangered list to a position of virtual invulnerability.

The Senator got an invaluable assist in all this from an unlikely source: the National Conservative Political Action Committee. Several days after the 1980 Republican sweep, NCPAC chief Terry Dolan announced the names of twenty intended liberal victims for 1982, including Moynihan. In January 1981, NCPAC began airing radio ads knocking him as a "big spender," which were to be followed up by a $750,000-media blitz. The NCPAC threat was just what Moynihan needed, and he exploited it shamelessly. Russert, who had become a fixture at liberal gatherings, prodded liberals to rally against the common enemy. Even some of Moynihan's harshest critics did so. "A lot of liberals endorsed him right away because he was attacked by NCPAC," said Abzug. "They overcame all their differences with him. It kind of closed things down."

But using NCPAC to marshal liberal support was only part of the equation. Unlike other Democratic Senators under assault by NCPAC, Moynihan concluded that the NCPAC ads would hurt, despite their outlandishness, if they were widely broadcast on television. Indeed, in states like Maryland and Nevada, they have hurt incumbent Democratic Senators this year, though probably not enough to be decisive in the election. Moynihan and Russert recruited a big-name attorney, Charles S. Desmond, to write an ominous-sounding letter to New York broadcasters, urging them not to accept NCPAC ads. "Stations airing advertisements sponsored by bona fide candidates are immune from any actions for libel based on any assertions or representations made," Desmond wrote. "However, no such protection exists for stations airing advertisements sponsored by groups such as NCPAC." The result: not a single NCPAC television spot was aired in New York this year. And in midsummer, NCPAC sheepishly pulled out.

THE NCPAC INTRUSION alone was not enough to spare Moynihan a stiff primary challenger and strong Republican opponent. Russert's tireless schmoozing with New York's fiercely ideological liberal community and his clever leaks to the press also were instrumental. And he capitalized on the queasiness among New York Democrats in the months after Ronald Reagan won the Presidency and a Republican town councilman named Alfonse M. D'Amato was elected to the Senate. Moynihan and Russert were afraid that former Representative Elizabeth Holtzman, who had lost narrowly to D'Amato, would run in the primary against Moynihan as the liberal's candidate. So Russert began buttonholing her natural allies at liberal club meetings and sessions of the New Democratic Coalition. "You may not always agree with Pat Moynihan, but you agree with him more than you disagree with him, and he is doing one hell of a job for New York," Russert declared time after time.

Russert enlisted three prominent liberal activists in his boss's cause: political consultant Ethan Geto, reformer Barbara Fife, and Raymond Harding, the chairman of the influential Liberal Party. Through an intermediary, Moynihan sent word to Holtzman that he was loaded with money and ready to combat her vigorously in a primary. To Holtzman's amazement, she began hearing a new assessment of Moynihan from liberals who might have sided with her. "A lot of them told her that Moynihan wasn't so bad," a Holtzman associate said. "The targeting by NCPAC made them think, 'Gee, this guy must be doing something right.'" In any case, Holtzman decided to run for Brooklyn district attorney (she won). Meanwhile, Fife hosted parties at her home at which Moynihan conferred with liberals, and Russert eagerly lobbied Harding in hopes of gaining the Liberal Party endorsement for Moynihan.

A significant force in New York politics, the Liberal Party backed Moynihan in 1976, but its relations with him had grown chilly. Moynihan's noisy pleas for tuition tax credits had driven a wedge between him and the party. But Russert persuaded Harding, no fan of Moynihan's windy and pedantic style, to meet with the Senator and negotiate their differences. "We're not a one-issue party," Harding said. "We decided to sit

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down with him and make peace." Moynihan agreed to insist that a strong civil rights plank be included in tuition tax legislation (it wasn't in the Reagan Administration's bill), and he promised to support all federal spending for public schools. "We agreed to disagree" on the remainder, Harding said, and the alliance was set. Moynihan got the Liberal endorsement again.

Moynihan cites another person who played a major role in his successful courtship of liberals. "It was Ronald Reagan," he said. Reagan's conservative policies gave Moynihan the opportunity to lead the liberal opposition, which he did swiftly on such issues as Social Security. But he also had to change the tone of his politics. "A lot of liberal antipathy to Moynihan was because of his saber-rattling, anti-Soviet posturing," said a Democratic strategist. "He didn't change the substance, but he toned down the rhetoric." Rather than emphasize foreign policy, as he often did during Jimmy Carter's Presidency, Moynihan "focused his image on domestic issues, and this was pleasing to liberals who were concerned about social programs," the strategist said. Nearly as important, he resisted the temptation to take public shots at liberals, as he had done as recently as 1980 when he lashed out against the Kennedy "cadres."

With liberals migrating to Moynihan, Russert went after the Senator's prospective Republican opponent, a handsome former Representative named Bruce Caputo. His initial plan was to link Caputo to the new right, discrediting his candidacy through guilt by association. The conventional wisdom was that the Moynihan forces should wait until Caputo got the Republican nomination before pouncing. But Russert wanted to drive Caputo out early and create disarray among New York Republicans. He figured that going after Caputo last winter, during a slow political season, would get more undivided press attention. It did. Caputo has blamed Russert for leaking information that led to his withdrawal in February, but it didn't happen quite that way. Russert had learned of discrepancies in Caputo's account of his military background—or non-military background, as it turned out. Whenever Caputo criticized Moynihan, Russert would toss in a mention of Caputo's military history in his response. "I would say, 'Even his description of his military record varies from article to article,'" Russert said. Finally, reporters questioned Caputo on the subject, forcing him to concede that he had given the false impression that he had served in the Army. A scandal erupted and he withdrew from the race.

For Moynihan and Russert, the thrill is gone from the fall campaign. The Senator is campaigning doggedly. And Russert mounted a massive effort to keep a little-known Democrat, Melvin Klenetsky, off the primary ballot. Klenetsky had submitted 29,857 petition signatures; after Moynihan workers got through challenging them, he had scarcely enough names left (10,047) for a place on the ballot. Other opposition has either been co-opted or vanquished. "Some time ago we were very excited about the prospects of beating pro-abortion incumbent Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan," the National Pro-Life Political Action Committee confessed in a late summer newsletter, "but it appears now that no candidate is likely to put together the coalition necessary to defeat him. Moynihan now holds a 4 to 1 lead." Whitney North Seymour, one of three Republicans who sought the Senate nomination against Moynihan, confessed in May that Republican prospects against Moynihan seemed "hopeless." As if to make his prophecy self-fulfilling, Seymour managed to get arrested for illegally passing out campaign literature at a county fair.

FRED BARNES

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Reagan v. black America.

MALIGN NEGLECT

THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION'S civil rights policies are coming under increasing attack. In the second week of September, the chairmen of thirty-three state agencies affiliated with the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights sent a widely publicized letter to President Reagan, charging him with responsibility for a "dangerous deterioration in the Federal enforcement of civil rights." Several days later a study prepared by the Washington Council of Lawyers was made public, which stated that the Administration "has retreated from well-established, bipartisan civil rights policies that were developed during both Democratic and Republican Administrations." The same evening, in a speech before the National Black Republican Council, Reagan angrily denied that his Administration discriminates against blacks, and made the extraordinary statement that black Americans would be better off today if Lyndon Johnson's Great Society programs had never been implemented.

It is by now widely acknowledged that the Reagan policies have had a devastating impact on blacks and other minorities. Unemployment figures are disproportionately high for blacks, especially black teenagers. In the two years since Reagan took office, unemployment has risen from almost 8 percent to almost 10 percent, while black unemployment has risen from almost 15 percent to almost 19 percent. Black teenage unemployment has jumped from almost 40 percent to

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almost 52 percent. Drastic cutbacks in federal funding of education, particularly student loan programs, have had the heaviest effect on minority students. Subsistence programs, such as food stamps and AFDC, have been severely reduced. The Legal Services Corporation has been targeted for elimination by the White House, and the Department of Justice, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Office of Federal Contract Compliance, and other federal agencies have curtailed enforcement of the laws against housing and employment discrimination. On September 18, during the Congressional Caucus's annual legislative weekend, Walter Fauntroy, chairman of the caucus, commented, "The fact is that the Reagan policies have plunged black America into its deepest depression in this century."

Every Administration is entitled to make its mark on public policy, and this is no less true in civil rights than in other areas of the law. There continues to be plenty of room for debate about civil rights policy—debate about where the worst problems are, where to allocate federal resources, and how to improve remedies for illegal discrimination. But there is no room for debate about what the law requires and whether it should be enforced. The obligation of government—particularly the Department of Justice—is clear.

UNDERLYING American civil rights law is a bipartisan consensus reflected in the statutes and court decisions of the last three decades. The law has several important elements: first, all Americans have enforceable rights under the Constitution that cannot be taken away or restricted by legislative or executive action; second, a person's right to be free from discrimination on grounds of race, sex, religion, or national origin is protected, whether that discrimination is caused by the intentional or unintentional actions of government; third, the courts have principal responsibility for remedying the abridgement of constitutional rights.

The Reagan Administration insists that it has a strong commitment to civil rights and complains of being unjustly criticized for experimenting with new methods of enforcement. But the criticisms are more fundamental: in many areas the Administration is failing to enforce, or even undermining, the law.

In education the Administration has seemed to go out of its way to avoid the enforcement of civil rights. The law is unequivocal: the government has an affirmative obligation to desegregate public schools. Since the enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Justice Department has had a statutory duty to protect the rights of public school children. In 1968 the Supreme Court made it clear, in *Green* v. *County Board of Education*, that "freedom of choice" plans are inadequate as remedies for school segregation because they put the burden of change on students rather than on the government, and because they have the effect of establishing a "right" of white children to "choose" to go to segregated schools.

Yet "freedom of choice" is the heart of the Administration's school desegregation policy. Last November, William Bradford Reynolds, Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, told a House judiciary subcommittee, "We are not going to compel children who don't choose to have an integrated education to have one." In Chicago, Houston, St. Louis, and other major metropolitan areas, the Administration is settling cases on "freedom of choice" principles, and is opposing student transfer plans that go beyond voluntary desegregation. Even where these plans are voluntarily adopted by local school boards, as they were in Seattle, the Administration is vigorously opposing them.

The Justice Department has attempted to defend its position upon the most feeble of pretexts. It has suggested that current desegregation policies require "racial balance" in public schools; they do not. It has said that busing can be ordered even if it is demonstrably harmful to children; the Supreme Court has made it clear that it cannot. When these false issues are removed, the department's position can be reduced to the following: since the Supreme Court has held that mandatory student transfers are remedies that can be used by federal courts only when necessary, the department should be free to decide that these remedies should *never* be used because they are, in the department's view, *never* necessary.

THIS IS NOT a dispute over busing; it is a dispute over the role of government in eliminating segregation. The Reagan Justice Department maintains that the government's only obligation is to remove legal racial barriers so that people can choose whether they want to desegregate. Yet the Supreme Court has held time and again that government has an affirmative obligation to ensure that public schools are desegregated and that no one has a right to choose to attend a segregated public school.

If the Reagan Administration does not believe it is violating the law, then the law must not mean what it says. That, in fact, is exactly what one Reagan White House official has publicly stated. Last December, Michael Uhlmann, a special assistant to the President who handles civil rights policy development, claimed it was inaccurate to say the Administration was not enforcing the law of the land, "unless you call all of the decisions of the Supreme Court the law of the land."

In addition to failing to enforce civil rights law, the Reagan Administration has consistently supported or deferred to the enactment of anticivil rights legislation at the federal, state, and local levels. In a Seattle school desegregation case recently decided by the U.S. Supreme Court (*Washington* v. *Seattle School District No. 1*), the Justice Department argued in favor of the constitutionality of a state statute prohibiting any busing or student assignments to achieve desegregation. The

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statute conflicted with a voluntary desegregation plan adopted by the city of Seattle, which challenged it on constitutional grounds. The only federal interest at stake in this case was the interest of the Administration in supporting legislation that restricts busing. Ironically, this position violated President Reagan's frequently stated opposition to federal interference with local government. In June the Supreme Court struck down the statute as unconstitutional.

At the other extreme is a Texas case recently decided by the U.S. Supreme Court involving a statute barring the children of illegal aliens from attending state public schools (*Plyler* v. *Doe*). Here the Administration took the opposite position from the one it espoused in the Seattle case, and told the Supreme Court that it had "no interest" in the way the Constitution was being applied by the State of Texas. This statute was also struck down last June by the Supreme Court as unconstitutional. Even the Eisenhower Administration—no great friend of civil rights—took the position in 1954 that it had a clear interest in the way the Constitution was being applied in Kansas and South Carolina, when *Brown* v. *Board of Education* came before the Court.

IN ANOTHER Supreme Court case, which involves state or local restrictions on the constitutional right to choose abortion, the Administration has made sure that its views be known. In August it filed an amicus curiae brief in the Supreme Court supporting local ordinances in Akron, Ohio, which sharply curtail abortion rights. The Justice Department had no difficulty finding the federal interest it said was lacking in the Texas case, and it took the remarkable position that interpreting constitutional rights is ultimately a question for legislative bodies, not the courts. In its brief, the Justice Department told the Supreme Court:

> In our democratic society the government body with the primary authority and responsibility to resolve competing policy views and pressures among citizens is the legislature. . . . The best way to determine who is right and who is wrong on these issues [of constitutional interpretation] is to permit and encourage the opposing sides to exercise their persuasive efforts on state legislators.

Under this theory, we might as well allow public opinion polls and lobbying campaigns to dictate constitutional law. That, of course, is exactly what the Reagan Administration is doing by supporting legislation to curtail the authority of the federal courts to use busing as a remedy in school desegregation, abortion, and school prayer cases.

The Reagan Administration has also challenged federal court jurisdiction. Instead of protecting the role of the courts in enforcing civil rights, it is trying to cut back court jurisdiction and circumvent judicial decisions. In its support of the Helms-Johnston antibusing bill, the Administration is tampering with the federal courts in a way that none of its predecessors has done. The bill would bar busing as a desegregation remedy even where the courts have no available alternative. It also would amend the equal protection clause of the Constitution by simple legislative majority. If Congress can do that where school integration is involved, it can reverse any Supreme Court interpretation and enforcement of the Constitution with which it disagrees. The American Bar Association has charged that the Helms-Johnston bill would create "the most serious constitutional crisis since the Civil War."

THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION'S attacks on the federal courts may well come back to haunt it. Someday a frustrated Congress may attack the institution of private property, which today is guaranteed by such constitutional provisions as "just compensation" and "obligation of contract." It would be a great irony if such a Congress were to use as precedent the Helms-Johnston bill of today. Court-stripping is a game that can be played by all parts of the political spectrum.

The Helms-Johnston bill is just one of many examples of the Administration's attack on the federal courts. Last January the White House rescinded regulations by the Treasury Department denying tax-exempt status to racially discriminatory private schools. The Justice Department said the regulations had no legal basis, and as a result the Administration granted exemptions to two racially discriminatory schools. In doing so, the Department disregarded appellate court decisions upholding the regulations based on both the Constitution and the Internal Revenue Code.

In the Administration's consistent efforts to make it more difficult to prove illegal discrimination, it shows repeatedly its intention of contravening civil rights law. Again, this intention has manifested itself in the area of public education. Mr. Reynolds had made it clear that the Justice Department will not follow the rule established by the Supreme Court a decade ago, in *Keyes* v. *School District No. One of Denver*, which allows suits to be brought to desegregate entire school districts when there is proof of intentional segregation for only part of the district.

The *Keyes* rule is a sensible one intended to speed up the process of desegregation and to save the time and resources that would otherwise be required to litigate scores of separate lawsuits. But the Administration will have nothing to do with this rule, just as it will have nothing to do with class actions in employment discrimination cases. It spent more than a year opposing a voting rights bill designed to allow general relief from discriminatory voting practices.

The Administration's underlying rationale is that the Constitution is "color-blind," and does not protect classes or categories of minorities unless each member can prove individually that he or she was a victim of intentional discrimination. In addition to being burdensome and unrealistic, this approach to civil rights enforcement is fundamentally at odds with the devel-

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opment of remedies responding to the history of race and sex discrimination in the United States. Can anyone doubt in 1982 that minorities and women as classes have been and are being discriminated against? The Administration's "color-blind" civil rights policy is blind to the reality of illegal discrimination and the efforts of the last three decades to address that reality.

The consequences of the Reagan civil rights program will be dangerous and far-reaching if it is fully implemented: constitutional rights will come to mean only what a political majority acting through legislative bodies says they mean, and they will only be enforced accordingly; federal courts will only be able to remedy denials of constitutional rights to the extent that they are authorized by Congress to do so; and a constitutional right will not be enforceable if it is abridged by the unintentional actions of government, no matter how severe the impact.

Of all the dangers in the Administration's civil rights policies, the danger that looms largest is that it will breed contempt for the law. How is the private employer, the small-town bureaucrat, or the city official to interpret this systematic withdrawal from civil rights enforcement except as a signal from Washington that the law does not have to be taken seriously?

JOHN SHATTUCK

John Shattuck is the national legislative director of the American Civil Liberties Union. This article is adapted from a speech delivered at the American Bar Association's annual convention in August 1982.

Can yellow journalism cover the world?

CITIZEN MURDOCH

BY PATRICK BROGAN

WITH GREAT fanfare, the New York *Daily News* announced on May 1, 1982: NEWS TO CITY: WE'RE HERE TO STAY. Its owner, the Chicago Tribune company, had just discovered that it could neither sell nor close the *News*, and had decided, perforce, to keep it going. On an inside page, the paper announced: TRIB TO RUPERT: DROP DEAD.

That blunt message was intended, of course, for Rupert Murdoch, Australian proprietor of the *New York Post*, the evening paper with which the *News* is waging the most acrimonious newspaper war the country has seen in years. Murdoch had won all the battles, so when the *News* suddenly recovered its hope of winning the war, it celebrated in its brashest style.

It had been galling for a leading American institution, which thought itself secure in its readership, advertising revenues, and reputation, to be beaten constantly by anything so dreadful as the *Post*. And it is not in the nature of a leading New York institution to admit that it can be bested by a foreigner. The *News* was experiencing the same baffled fury most of Fleet Street has known for the past twelve years, and Sydney for the past quarter-century. Murdoch has come out of the bush and taken the world's leading publishers to the cleaners. He is much smarter than they, a better newspaperman, and produces quite horrible, but successful, newspapers.

The *News* was therefore delighted to record a victory (confirmed on July 26, when it reached an agreement with the last of its unions on a $50-million economy plan) which guarantees its survival for another five years. In this war, to survive is to win, and the odds are now heavily against the *Post*. Murdoch has said that there is room for only one tabloid in New York, and the morning paper has a built-in advantage that even as exceptional an evening paper as the *Post* cannot overcome.

It was a damn close-run thing, as the Duke of Wellington said of Waterloo, and Murdoch's admirers might add that the final verdict is not yet in. The Tribune company, panicked by the *News*'s losses, offered to sell it last December, but by spring there still were no viable takers. Then Murdoch sanctimoniously offered to take over the *News* himself. He would have merged the two papers, solved all of his money problems, and resumed his empire's expansion in America.

At the time, according to Murdoch, the *Post* was losing $20 million a year, and, having failed to kill or eat the *News*, he has to carry this considerable loss indefinitely, or admit defeat and close the paper. Its cover price has just been raised from 25¢ to 30¢ (no effect on sales has yet been admitted), and the *Post* has

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more advertising than it did a year ago. But the losses are certainly still a great deal more than the profits on his other American papers, *The Star* (a weekly tabloid that sells through supermarkets), *New York* magazine and *The Village Voice* in New York, and two papers in San Antonio. And Murdoch's British operations are running at a large loss. His most prestigious property, *The Times* of London, together with *The Sunday Times*, is losing £15 million ($27 million), his mass-circulation Sunday paper, the *News of the World* and its magazine, *SunDay*, are also losing heavily, and the profits from *The Sun* are down. His Australian operations are profitable, but certainly do not make enough to pay for losses in Britain and the United States.

The losses at *The Times* will continue indefinitely. With the survival of the *Daily News* guaranteed for five years, the *New York Post* will continue to lose money. Murdoch has borrowed to the limit of his credit on three continents, and has huge interest payments to meet. His holding company, the News Corporation, can certainly afford the losses this year (it did $1.2-billion worth of business last year), but there will soon come a time when the hard-faced money men will try to call a halt, and then it will be bad news for one of the papers, possibly *The Times*, possibly the *Post*.

MURDOCH will certainly not give up the *Post* without a fight. His name appears on the staff listing as editor-in-chief. He took over a dying paper from Dolly Schiff in 1976, and has spent $120 million to remake it in his own image. It is mean, vicious, vulgar journalism, but it is also sharp, aggressive, popular, and successful. The circulation has jumped from half-a-million to 900,000. The economic forces that have wiped out evening papers in Washington, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Chicago, and Minneapolis in the past few years are pressing down upon the *New York Post*, but if sensationalism will save it, Murdoch will supply it.

The *Post* had a front-page splash: "BLOOMINGDALE 'BURIED LIKE A DOG'—Jilted model accuses millionaire's widow." The *Post* has enjoyed the Bloomingdale story. One handy measure of journalistic sleaziness is the adjective count. On August 24, the *Post* story began, "Millionaire tycoon Alfred Bloomingdale, embroiled in a steamy palimony suit with a woman half his age, died Friday and was secretly buried." After that, we had "the torrid love triangle," "socialite wife Betsy," "actress-model 'Vicky Morgan," "the ravishing 29-year-old," with the "sizzling claims."

The front page tells a lot about a newspaper, particularly a tabloid. Some *Post* classics include: HOW I BECAME A MASS MURDERER, BY DAVID BERKOWITZ, a headline which Murdoch wrote himself, for a story about Son of Sam's old letters to a girl friend; and TEEN PUNKS SHOOT 2 COPS. That was accompanied by a photograph captioned, "Cop-hating punk Jose Duran, 18, sullenly waits to be led away in handcuffs after he and two other teens allegedly gunned down two cops in Queens." Some "allegedly"! The dog-days story this year was 500-LB. RAPIST LIVING IT UP. That pornographic tidbit was chewed over for days.

Another measure of a paper's sleaziness is its level of political argument. In New York's gubernatorial campaign, the *Post* supported Mayor Ed Koch for the Democratic nomination against Lieutenant Governor Mario Cuomo. Indeed, the *Post* practically invented the Koch candidacy. Last February, just after he had started his second term as Mayor, the paper ran coupons for its readers to fill in and send off to Koch, urging him to run for Governor. Thousands did so. Surprised and gratified, Koch accepted Murdoch's blandishments (he is a longtime friend). On March 3, the *Post*'s front-page splash read "CUOMO RIPS THE MAYOR—Shock attack: Says that Koch would 'walk through slime.' " Note the direct quote. In fact, Cuomo was himself quoting Koch, who had referred to the New York Liberal Party as "slime." The main distinction of the *New York Post*, however, is not that it is sensational and irresponsible, but that it is corrupting. It panders to hate, fear, and to racial and ethnic divisions in New York, which is a worse place because of it.

Like other great newspaper proprietors in the past, such as Hearst or Pulitzer or Northcliffe, Murdoch believes that the only way to look at most politicians is down. They rarely disappoint him. Last November, there were elections for Mayor and other major posts in New York. The next morning, when the victors might have preferred to rest from their labors, they went instead to breakfast with Murdoch in the Hilton Hotel.

It was billed as a seminar on the city's future, but in fact it was to pay homage. Koch was there (he admits that he owes his first election as Mayor in 1977 to Murdoch), and so was the new Brooklyn district attorney, former Representative Elizabeth Holtzman. She had been savagely attacked by the *Post* when she ran for the Senate in 1980, and again when she ran in the Democratic primary for Brooklyn district attorney. The *Post* even ran her rival's press releases as news items. But Miss Holtzman could not afford the luxury of self-respect. Murdoch is too powerful. There she was, the day after the election, smiling happily, ready to forgive and forget and to lick his boots.

Murdoch learned to deal with politicians and journalists in Australia, which is as rough and tough now as New York was eighty years ago. Here is a true and characteristic story, told by a millionaire Australian prospector, Lang Hancock, about Murdoch and Charles Court, who was economic minister at the time, and later Premier of Western Australia: "I got a call from Rupert Murdoch, saying he'd never been up north and could I show it to him. So I flew him all around the Pilbara and each day he became more enamored with it, and he decided he'd like to buy into one of the Hanwright prospects. And I said: 'That's no

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good, because the government won't negotiate with us.' So he said: 'Look, if I can get Charles Court to negotiate, will you sell me a piece of the cake?' And I said: 'Yes, by all means.'

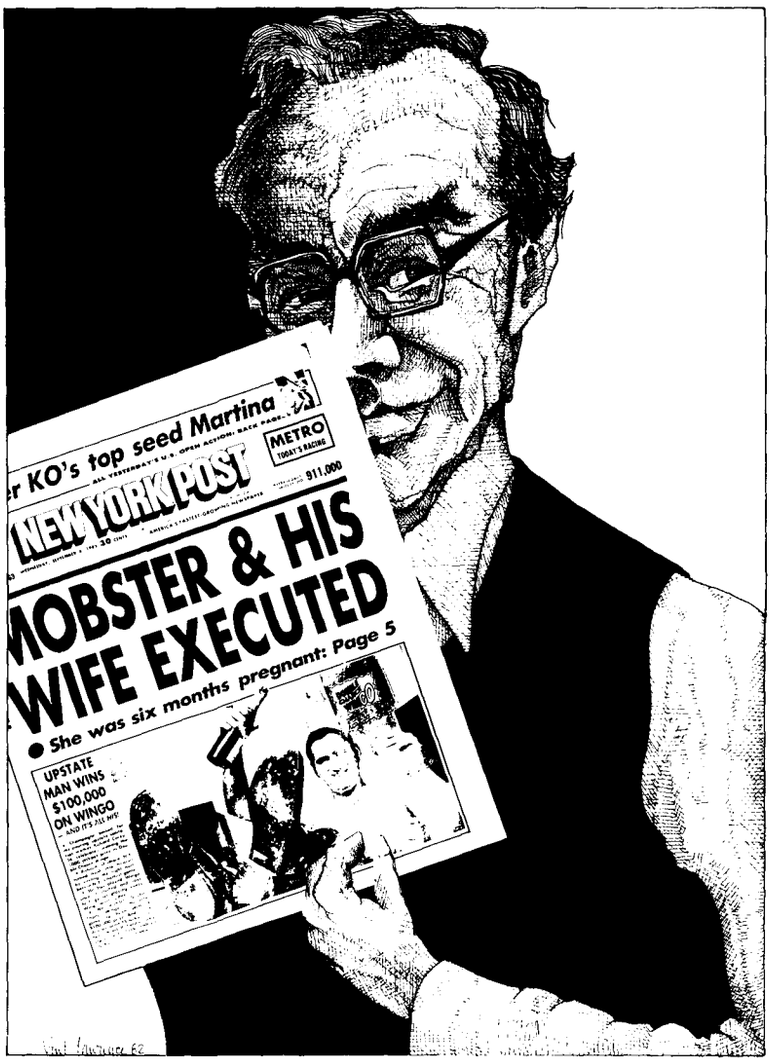
"When we returned to Perth there was a message asking Rupert to contact Charles Court, so he went off in his bush clothes to see him. I went home to bed. Ten o'clock that night there's a knock at the door and it's Rupert. 'You're in,' he said. 'How on earth did you manage that?' I said. 'Simple,' said Rupert. 'I went to Court and told him: 'Look, you can have a headline a day or a bucket of shit every day. What's it to be?'"

Murdoch is now 51, with a dazzling career behind him and heady prospects ahead. He was born to the purple, and his greatest ambition is to outdo his father. Sir Keith Murdoch was the most distinguished Australian journalist of his day, and a pillar of the establishment. He built up the largest newspaper group in the country, based on *The Herald*. Rupert Murdoch went to the best schools in Australia and to Oxford.

Sir Keith died in 1952. He had managed, not owned, *The Herald*, and bequeathed only a few small newspapers to his son. The board of the Herald company made it clear that it had no room for Rupert, then aged 21. The company's new chairman was an old friend of Sir Keith's, and executor of his will. He sold half the Murdoch newspaper properties to the Herald group, to pay inheritance taxes. All that was left for Rupert was the Adelaide *News*, and he had great trouble saving that. He is said never to have forgiven the way he was treated by *The Herald* thirty years ago. He tried to buy it in 1979, and failed. He may soon try again.

Murdoch learned his trade in Adelaide. He became master of every aspect of producing a newspaper: he wrote and edited stories, laid out the pages, and printed them. There has been no one in America to match him this century, or in London since Northcliffe. His financial talents are equally remarkable. News Corporation is as big as Knight-Ridder, and nearly as big as the New York Times Company and Dow Jones *(The Wall Street Journal)* put together.

His technique has been to buy newspapers and television stations wherever they were to be had, usually when they were *in extremis*. That was how he broke into the Sydney market in 1960. He bought the wreckage of an evening tabloid, the *Daily Mirror*, that was about to expire. It was there that he first applied the formula of aggressive journalism that brought such vast profit to *The Sun* in London, and that he has applied to the *Post* in New York. The *Mirror* is now the largest-selling paper in Australia.



RUPERT MURDOCH BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Murdoch did not bring sleazy journalism to Sydney. The *Mirror* formerly belonged to Ezra Norton, who in 1950 ran a photograph on the front page of the marriage of Seretse Khama, paramount chief of Bechuanaland (now Botswana), to the daughter of Sir Stafford Cripps, British Chancellor of the Exchequer. The caption read "Fi, fie, fo, fum. What's he got that a white man hasn't?"

Ten years after acquiring the *Mirror*, Murdoch acquired another pair of faltering newspapers in Sydney, the *Daily* and *Sunday Telegraph*. These too are now operating at a nice profit. He also owns television stations in Melbourne and Sydney, newspapers and magazines in every part of the country, and shares in energy companies. He is the biggest book publisher in Australia, has large interests in ranching and record companies, a share in the film industry, and a half share in Australia's largest private airline. He has just started a new daily newspaper in Brisbane. If he can

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overcome his cash-flow problems, the empire will expand mightily: his two main newspaper rivals are both in real trouble, and there are pickings to be had.

Murdoch's prestige paper in Australia is *The Australian*, which he founded in 1964. It was to be the country's first national newspaper, published simultaneously in all major cities. It was a bold endeavor, in which pages were flown across a country as large as the United States. *The Australian* was an excellent paper to begin with, until Murdoch wantonly destroyed its credibility, for political reasons, in 1975.

IN THE GENERAL ELECTION of 1972, Murdoch had supported the Labour Party: he was going through a short-lived Socialist phase. Later he told *The Village Voice*: "In 1972, I ran all the electoral policies of my papers in Australia and got deeply, far too deeply, involved. Looking back, we did some dreadful things to the other side. In 1975, I changed my mind." The 1975 general election was the most vicious in recent Australian history. The Murdoch papers were so blatantly biased that the staff of *The Australian* went on strike. Murdoch had installed one of his hatchet men, Bruce Rothwell, to take out everything favorable to Gough Whitlam, the Labour leader, and strengthen everything favorable to the Liberal leader, Malcolm Fraser. Rothwell is now editorial page editor of the *New York Post*.

The staff wrote to Murdoch: "*The Australian* has become a laughingstock. It is not so much the policy itself, but the blind, biased, tunnel-visioned, ad hoc, logically confused and relentless way in which so many people are now conceiving it to be carried out, both in the editorial and in the news columns. We cannot be loyal to a propaganda sheet. We cannot accept the deliberate or careless slanting of headlines, seemingly blatant imbalance in news presentation, political censorship, and on occasion, distortion of copy from senior, specialist journalists, the political management of news and features, the stifling of dissent and even unpalatably impartial opinion in the paper's columns."

Murdoch came to London in 1969, a prodigy from the antipodes. The *News of the World*, a popular Sunday paper with the largest circulation of any newspaper in the world after *Pravda*, was for sale. The family that owned it had become afflicted with the galloping senility that eventually affects all newspaper dynasties. It was losing money and sales. Murdoch made short work of a rival purchaser, and soon turned the paper once more into a profitable enterprise.

Then, in quick succession, another media conglomerate offered him *The Sun* (formerly *The Daily Herald*), a worthy, boring, leftish, popular broadsheet that was about to close, and London Weekend Television delivered itself to him to pull it out of a managerial and financial crisis.

He applied Sydney tactics to *The Sun*. Godfrey Hodgson of *The Sunday Times* interviewed him about his plans, and Murdoch asked him if there was anything he admired in the rival *Daily Mirror*. Hodgson said he liked its pull-out news-feature section, called "Mirrorscope." Murdoch seized an example of Mirrorscope with finger and thumb, and ostentatiously dropped it into the wastepaper basket. "If you think we're going to have any of that upmarket shit in our paper," he said, "you're very much mistaken." As editor, he hired the most gifted popular journalist of the time, Larry Lamb; made *The Sun* a tabloid; put naked ladies on page three (the "soar-away Sun birds"); and its prodigious growth began. Its circulation rose from 700,000 to over four million (more than all the New York papers together), and in the days of its glory it was making over $30 million a year. He turned LWT around, too, largely by sacking an amazing number of overpaid and unnecessary staff. These three British properties were the money machines that paid for his great expansion in Australia, and his move to America in 1973.

MURDOCH'S INFLUENCE on Fleet Street has been wholly pernicious. *The Sun* would have died without him, but without him Britain would have been spared daily pornography, mindless sensationalism, and, perhaps, the disgraceful, screaming chauvinism of most of the British press during the Falklands war (THE SUN SAYS: STICK IT UP YOUR JUNTA). Murdoch justifies his papers' crassness by pointing to the circulation figures and prating about freedom of the press. Just the excuse offered by the owner of every "adult" bookshop.

In 1981 Murdoch bought *The Times*, the most famous newspaper in the world, and *The Sunday Times*. *The Times* was dying on its feet, partly through editorial inadequacies, but chiefly through labor troubles and managerial ineptitude. Murdoch has made some progress toward solving the labor problems, at huge cost and with a crisis every three months. He gave formal guarantees of editorial independence to the two papers that only the foolish or desperate believed. They had to shut their eyes to Murdoch's record and their ears to what he was telling them: in a television interview after he bought *The Times*, he said, "The proprietor's got to pay the bill at the end of the week. He's got to meet the payroll. And the proprietor has to be involved in the strategy or he has to have a successful editor. A successful editor has total freedom. It's when things are going badly, the paper's losing circulation, that the proprietor has to step in or he's going to have no newspaper and the people who work for him, they're going to have no jobs."

It was a fair warning, and an eminently sensible point. Editorial independence can mean very little to a paper as near death's door as *The Times*. Within a year of buying it, Murdoch proved his point by sacking the first editor he appointed, Harold Evans, former editor of *The Sunday Times*. When rumors of Evans's departure

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first surfaced, Murdoch issued a statement saying, "Reports that Harold Evans is about to be replaced as editor of *The Times* are malicious, self-serving and wrong." Evans was fired just a month later. Murdoch's guarantees of independence seemed to preclude such an abrupt demonstration of proprietorial prerogative, despite Evans's obvious incompetence. For a few days Evans refused to leave, and there were two editors in the building. Murdoch won, of course.

THERE HAVE BEEN no sensational changes at *The Times* since Murdoch bought it. His intention is to increase its circulation by lowering its sights, eventually challenging the middle-brow *Daily Telegraph* and giving up the elitist, specialized market that sustained the paper in the past. The trend is already apparent. *The Times* is more rabidly conservative than it used to be, and took an extreme chauvinistic line over the Falklands war. Its circulation has risen but its advertising is negligible, and the paper is still losing a great deal of money. Further changes can be expected at both papers, perhaps more at *The Sunday Times*. The former editor of *The Sun*, Sir Larry Lamb, is now editor-in-chief of *The Australian* and tells colleagues he expects to be given *The Sunday Times* by January.

Murdoch's power is not restricted to firing his editors. He uses his newspapers to further his commercial interests. The acquisition of *The Times* is a good example: it appeared to be a blatant violation of antitrust laws, but it was permitted by the government because, according to one of Murdoch's most senior executives, "Maggie thought she owed me a favor." The favor was in return for Murdoch's newspapers' support of Margaret Thatcher's Conservatives in the 1979 election.

Murdoch has tried his hand at influence-peddling in America, too. When he bought a half share in Ansett Airlines in 1979, it was in the market for new jets. Murdoch took over the negotiations himself, and got the most favorable deal from Boeing, on the condition that it obtain financing from the Export-Import Bank, $290.1 million at 8 percent. On the day that the bank's board considered the loan, February 19, 1980, Murdoch was having lunch with Jimmy Carter at the White House. The Export-Import Bank board rushed the loan through with brisk efficiency. Members had twenty minutes to read the briefs instead of the usual twenty-four hours. One of them said, "I think it was inadequately, totally inadequately, prepared. I just don't understand the transaction." Others thought they did. Murdoch and Carter, of course, never discussed the Ex-Im loan. That would have been unnecessary.

Yet Carter got what he wanted: Murdoch's support against Senator Kennedy in the Democratic primary in New York. Murdoch did not have to strain to accommodate Carter. The *Post* had been virulently anti-Kennedy for years. On December 9, 1979, a headline proclaimed, "TEDDY IS THE TOAST OF TEHRAN. Mob hails him as Hero after his Shah attack." On January 17, the *Post* started to run a series on "Ted Kennedy's Secret Parties." Murdoch got his loan, and the *Post* supported Jimmy Carter in the primary.

Murdoch made no promises for the general election, and that fall the *Post* supported Reagan. It was a wise choice: the Ex-Im loan was in difficulty, and needed assistance at the highest level. All those New York Republicans whom Murdoch had helped to victory, led by Senator Alfonse D'Amato and Representative Jack Kemp, held a testimonial dinner for him on January 12, 1981, and presented him with a facsimile of the *Post*'s front page endorsing Reagan, inscribed "To Rupert Murdoch. This will always be a memorable day for me. Nancy and I want you to know you will always have our deepest appreciation. Ronald and Nancy Reagan."

David Stockman wanted to abolish the Ex-Im Bank and the Ansett loan with it. As he told Bill Greider, "How in the world can I cut food stamps and social services and CETA jobs and EDA jobs and you're going to tell me, you can't give up a penny for Boeing?" Bank and loan survived, one of the early defeats of Reaganomics.

IT HAS BEEN YEARS since newspaper proprietors threw their weight around with American politicians as openly as Murdoch does. It happens all the time in Australia, and has long been the norm in Britain. British proprietors, as Stanley Baldwin put it, have always enjoyed "power without responsibility, the privilege of the harlot throughout the ages."

Using the influence conferred by owning newspapers to further their business interests is an old game for proprietors: the eminently respectable Thomsons were offered a cut of North Sea oil because they owned *The Times*, and made billions. American proprietors may be slightly more discreet, but not much. Murdoch has never seen any need for discretion in his business dealings or manipulating politicians. He has carried the newspaper business in New York back to the gory and sleazy days of Citizen Hearst, and reformed characters like the *Daily News* are appalled.

There is one final ingredient in his character that is almost totally missing among American and British proprietors. He takes risks. Time Inc. closed *The Washington Star* after losing $30 million; Murdoch has spent four times that on the *Post*. Buying the waterlogged *Times* was an amazing gamble. One of his former henchmen in London says, "He's a buccaneer: when he sees a sail on the horizon, he wants to sink it."

It is the old entrepreneurial spirit, alive and well, though imported from Australia. In its way, most admirable. Unfortunately, the fruits of all that enterprise are newspapers like the *New York Post*.

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STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Australian Graffiti; French Pastry

An Australian film called *The Road Warrior* has been moving around the country toward New York on golden paths. It's a sequel, I gather, to a film called *Mad Max*, which I haven't seen; this sequel, under the title *Mad Max 2*, was being heralded with gargantuan posters in the Paris Métro last month. If, like me, you're tuning in late, I can tell you (courtesy of the *International Film Guide* 1980) that the first film was set in the devastated, (presumably) postnuclear-war future and was about a special police force, including the grimly heroic Mad Max, which tried to keep order on the roads. In gang wars, Max's wife and child were killed; this understandably made him madder still.

The Road Warrior
(Warner Brothers)

L'Adolescente
(Landmark Films)

The sequel takes place a bit further along in the future. Almost all we see is wasteland; and the great question for those still alive is the supply of energy. Thus this picture is a counterbalance to the French film *Quest for Fire* of some months ago in which prehistoric man discovered fuel and energy. In *The Road Warrior*, posthistoric man is trying to preserve the last of fuel and energy in order to preserve the remnants of humanity.

But this professed theme is spurious—not as such, but in the hands of these filmmakers. These people, consciously or not, have used this idea merely as a cover to get to their real theme: driving. Driving motor vehicles, of one kind or another. The writers, Terry Hayes, George Miller, and Brian Hannant, have built a script—pitiful in any other regard—that permits the film to stay on wheels, fast-moving, for at least two-thirds of its 94 minutes. In an Australian desert is a stockade containing a precious huge tank of gasoline defended by Good Guys and a few Good Gals. A villainous lord and his motor-mounted band, including some burly punk homosexuals on motorcycles, are trying to invade and seize the fuel. The "lone gun," Mad Max, arrives at the stockade through plot devices, wins the confidence of the Good Guys' leader, finds a trailer truck to haul the gas tank out through the enemy forces, and eventually saves it. As he stands on a rise in the road at the end, posed with casual picturesqueness, a voice tells us that the Good People, traveling north after his rescue, will save humanity's future. Thanks, Max.

Logic doesn't matter in this script—for instance, the fact that more gasoline is burned up in the course of the film than could possibly be contained in the tank they're all fighting over. And it doesn't matter that moralistic simplicities are posted like traffic signs along the route to this Armageddon. These are all just enablements, like old opera librettos designed to provide chances for solos, duets, trios, and so on. Here the "arias" are virtuoso driving contests, races, battles, smashes, accidents, and escapes—in all sorts of vehicles, including a homemade helicopter.

What goes on here is as close to a Western on wheels as is imaginable, an old-fashioned Western too, where everyone, filmmakers and audience, knew that the hero couldn't act, didn't want to see him act, wanted to see him fighting and riding. Riding in order to fight. Miller, the co-author who also directed, has worked every possible change on ways of looking at speeding vehicles and the people driving them—through the windshield (both ways), from the floor of the driver's seat, alongside the whizzing wheels, perched on the axles, on leaping motorcycles, at road level as the truck roars over our heads, and more. Since Miller has worked every possible change, he soon runs out of changes, but the picture never becomes actually unbearable. Tedious, yes, but with a lulling tedium that's almost wryly pleasant since it's a paradoxical counterpoint to the incessant fury and violence on the screen. Miller's true ingenuity has gone into two elements, really—nothing to do with conventional film components—and his success with them accounts, I'd guess, for the film's success.

First, the more obvious one, is the choreography of the cars. Miller has some grip on ideas of vast space and of cars and groups of cars moving like dancers through it. Second, more subtle, the film plays to and nourishes the driver-conditioning of the twentieth century. Consider the age at which that conditioning begins in our society: small children, boys and girls, sit next to daddy or mommy in the front seat, clutching a toy steering wheel, mimicking the parent. Adolescents, male and female, can't wait for their driving licenses, their proof of entry into the world of independent action, sexual life, and display of self and skill. They don't necessarily wait for their licenses to enjoy these matters: but it's the driving license that certifies them.

American Graffiti (1973) showed, rhythmically and well, the function of the car in the complex lives of young people: not just a place for lovemaking for those who as yet have no homes of their own but a means of displaying plumage, of courtship, a tournament for

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Birgit Haas Must Be Killed. Just what one wants in a political thriller: suspense and intelligence. French agents trap a German terrorist in Germany.

E.T., The Extra-Terrestrial. If you can fight your way in. Some kinds of heartwarming hokum really warm us, and much of this does the job.

Lola. Late Fassbinder. A remake of *The Blue Angel*, sort of, done in high Hollywood style and very well acted.

A Midsummer Night's Sex Comedy. Turn-of-the-century vaudeville turns. Woody Allen's best direction—of a generally painless, sometimes amusing script.

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skills, a center for dreams. *The Road Warrior*, by moving into the bare future, strips away the cultural doodads and concentrates on driving. The cortical fact is that driving itself has become more important to many of us than the fact of transportation or than what goes on in the car, moving or parked: driving itself has become a locus for egotistical, even sensory satisfactions, for redress against slights and inferior status. (Watch the way some "ethnics" drive.) Driving is citizenship. *The Road Warrior* dramatizes the idea that the threat of fuel exhaustion as a threat to commerce and society is only secondary. The primary threat—and the public response to the film seems to prove this point—is to the sheer act of driving.

Some have said that this film, with its predominantly male cast and slam-bang tenor, is a man's or boy's picture. I disagree. I saw it amidst an audience at least half of which were women, mostly young, who were riveted. We all know women who drive as well or better than most men and who get the same tacit, airy pleasure from it. *The Road Warrior*, schlock though it is in terms of what it pretends to be about, has struck a chord deep in the psyche of the Western world.

WHY DOES Jeanne Moreau direct? It's as if she felt it obligatory: as a prominent figure in French film, to show her range; as a prominent woman, to help open opportunities for women. So far, however, the results have been disastrous.

In 1976 Moreau directed *Lumière*, in which she also played the leading role of an actress, which pretended to be about women's problems and was in effect a distasteful exercise in self-adoration. Now she presents *L'Adolescente*, which she wrote with Henriette Jellinek and in which she doesn't appear. It's a heap of platitudes and falsities, cinematic and otherwise.

The protagonist is a twelve-year-old girl in 1939. To that extent, and possibly in some of the details, it could be autobiographical; otherwise not. The girl goes with her parents, a Parisian butcher and his Dutch wife, to spend the summer, as they always do, with her French grandmother in her village home. What a village! A Disney village with singing flowers and chuckling robins could hardly surpass its unblemished prettiness—of place and personnel. In the course of the summer the girl develops a crush on the young village doctor, a Jewish *locum tenens* against whom there is no kind of prejudice. The doctor responds to the girl with affection only, while he has an affair with her Dutch mother—an affair that goes through the foreseeable strophes from Undying Passion to Summer's End. If I add that the French grandmother is earth-motherly and all-wise, the Woolworth artwork is complete.

The child is adequately played by Laetitia Chauveau. That wonderful German actress, Edith Clever (who was the Marquise of O . . .) does all she can to break the Dutch mother out of her papier-mâché mold. The doctor, Francis Huster, is agreeable enough. Simone Signoret, the grandmother, now aged, could easily be just as beautiful, if differently so, as she used to be; instead she has become a swollen insult to her former self; and her acting is comparably swollen.

The final offense is in the closing moments. The butcher realizes what has happened between his wife and the doctor, and he attacks the doctor. The fight is broken up; and we hear that, on this very night, Hitler invaded Poland. World War II brings an end to this village's "gentle way of life." As if the husband's understandable attack on the Jew were in any way a precursor of attacks that were to follow. As if, until World War II, French villages were free of venom, venality, and superstition. As if, directorially speaking, Moreau had a scrap of originality or talent.

Fort Worth, once a cow town, is an art mecca now.

BODHISATTVAS IN TEXAS

BY JOHN CANADAY

If you are in the mood just now for Japanese Buddhist sculpture of the years 600 to 1300 A.D., then Fort Worth, Texas, is the place for you. The Kimbell Art Museum, ten years old this October, is celebrating its birthday with an exhibition of fifty pieces on loan from temples and museums, including national treasures that might never again be given licenses to leave Japan, at least not in a single group of such importance. The majority of the sculptures are of wood, hence so fragile that the cases in which they travel are examples of Japanese craftsmanship in themselves, and the routine of packing and unpacking by the team of Japanese curators who travel with them under the direction of Kyotaro Nishikawa, Japan's Chief Inspector of Cultural Properties Protection Department, is a performance as stylish and precise as Kabuki.

In a word, the show at the Kimbell Art Museum is wonderful; in fifty more, from Sherman Lee, speaking from his position as an eminent orientalist:

> the inclusion of seven National Treasures and thirty Important Cultural Properties among the fifty sculptures insures a qualitative level not seen before in the United States. The full measure of Buddhist expression from compassion to the extraordinary visions of the terrible will be covered by the intelligent and carefully made selection of masterworks.

He is right. Even for anyone who has traveled in Japan and assiduously hunted out sculptures still in their original temple sites, there is plenty here to see for the first time, not only from temples not easy to get to, or in, but from temples where you can't see much even when you're there. (My favorite Japanese temple, Shin-Yakushi Ji in Nara, has to be visited by flashlight.) The exhibition includes three of the host of fifty-two Bodhisattvas that float on clouds on the upper walls of the so-called Phoenix Hall, part of Byōdō-in, a combination villa and temple complex in Kyoto built by Prime Minister Fujiwara Yorimichi, a member of a family that had made itself the most power-

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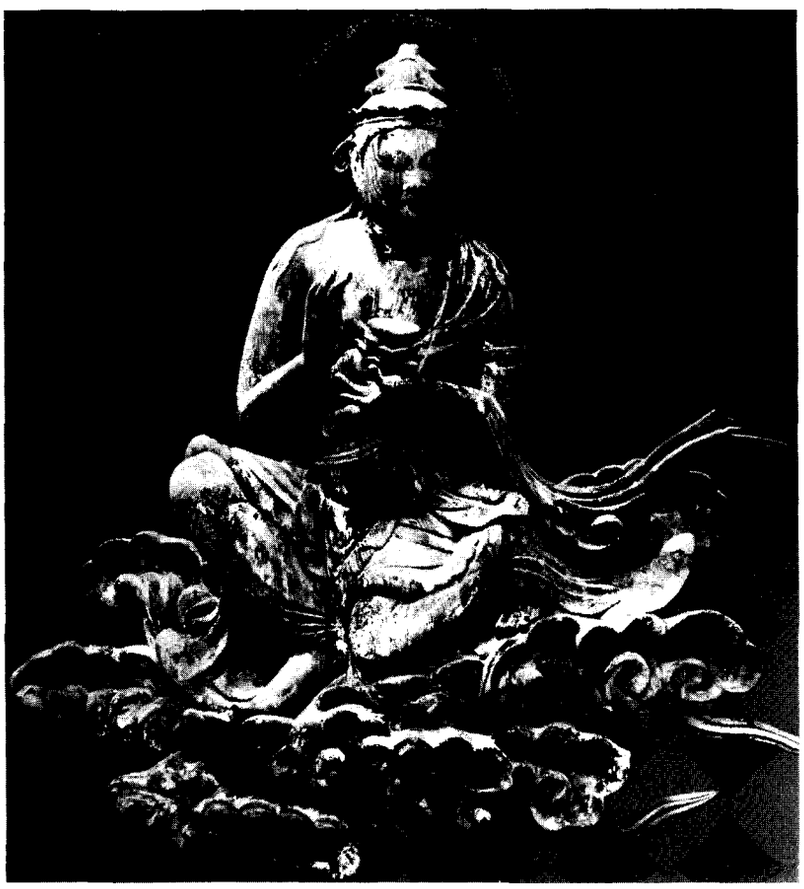
ful influence at court. (We are back in the mid-eleventh century, mind you.) The Bodhisattvas riding on their elegant clouds are beautiful enough in situ but tell primarily as silhouettes; to have three of them come down to earth for close inspection is a rare privilege. In contrast with the serene dignity of earlier sculptured Bodhisattvas nearby, or the dramatic baroque attitudinizing of a pair of ferocious half-nude thirteenth-century guardian deities at the exhibition entrance, these three angelic Bodhisattvas have a downright rococo, almost playful sophistication.

Bodhisattvas are persons who have achieved such great moral and spiritual wisdom that they are potential Buddhas, but have chosen to defer, or reject, nirvana in order to assist suffering mankind. At the last moment before the opening at the Kimbell, Dr. Nishikawa had the three sculptures lifted a few feet above eye level in order that they might continue to look down at us, a most perceptive bit of installation, since otherwise the eyes would have seemed to be avoiding ours by looking at the floor. I hope it doesn't sound silly, but after nine hundred years on their perches in Kyoto these three exquisite beings really do seem to have descended on the city of Fort Worth with particular graciousness and patience.



"BODHISATTVA ON CLOUDS" (1053 A.D.). COURTESY OF THE KIMBELL ART MUSEUM

The exhibition is a coup for the Kimbell Art Museum and by extension for Fort Worth, which not long ago seemed the least likely of major Texas cities to achieve top spot in the state's competitive culture boom. Back in the 1920s when I was growing up in San Antonio and Austin, Dallas was the state's cultural center insofar as there was one, San Antonio its picturesque reminder of a Spanish past, and Austin a pastoral paradise where, during my five years as an undergraduate at the university, the fine arts were represented by a single traveling exhibition from the National Academy in New York and an inaudible lecture by a very tired old man, the sculptor Lorado Taft, on art's capacity to uplift the soul. Houston was an ambitious but still adolescent city to keep your eye on, and Fort Worth was—what else?—a cow town.

No longer. Dallas lost its early lead when the big money failed to get interested in Texas's first respectable program for an art museum, but has come back strong in the last few years (perhaps stimulated by the traditional Dallas/Fort Worth rivalry) with an impressive new building under way. Houston has a classy museum dedicated, of course, to modern art in a culturally lopsided city where you don't have to know who Piero della Francesca was if you have had your portrait done by Andy Warhol. The university at Austin has a big art department, a mediocre collection, and a constant flood of first-rate rental exhibitions. San Antonio, after drifting along with a museum (the old Witte) where the collection included, I remember, but for reasons I have never known, a translucent plastic parrot illuminated from inside by an electric bulb, now has the McNay Art Institute with its excellent small collection of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century art, and a new all-purpose city museum in a former Romanesque Revival brewery, an inspiring (I mean it) example of preservation by adaptation.

But Fort Worth has the Fort Worth Art Museum, devoted to current modern art (although Thomas Eakins's "The Swimming Hole" has somehow wandered into it); the Amon Carter Museum of Western Art, which, contrary to whatever you might expect, is not given over to cornball cowboy art but to preserving a serious record of life, including urban life, and landscape in the American West in painting, sculpture, and photographs; and, capping things off in the last decade, the Kimbell, which plays the field from antiquity to fauvism and cubism—all these plus a couple of small theaters in a loosely organized complex around the aging Will Rogers Coliseum, fine for rodeos and stock shows, which seems anachronistic among its sleek companions. On the periphery of this cultural center en route to see the Japanese exhibition I asked a leather-faced Stetsoned old man—something of an anachronism himself—how to get to the Kimbell Art Museum, but he couldn't help. "There's so many of them dang things around nowadays I can't tell which is which," he said.

When it comes to endowment for acquisitions, the Kimbell and the Getty in Santa Monica are the best-fixed museums in this country, but money doesn't account for the Kimbell's Japanese coup. The groundwork was laid by Richard Fargo Brown, the first director, who died two years ago, and arrangements were completed by the new director, Edmund P. Pillsbury and the curator of Oriental art, currently very

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starry-eyed with good reason, Emily Sano. Primary considerations for Bunkachō, Japan's Agency for Cultural Affairs, were the practical one of the Kimbell's excellent security record, the aesthetic one of sympathetic exhibition space in Louis Kahn's famous building, and the scholarly one of Dr. Sano's participation with Dr. Nishikawa in the preparation of a catalogue, which has turned out to be exemplary in every way, including the large color plates of each of the sculptures.

AS FOR LOUIS KAHN'S famous building, the Kimbell's anniversary comes at a time when half a dozen important American museum buildings are on the drawing boards and suggests another look at how well this one has worn and how well it has worked. It was greeted ten years ago as the most beautiful of all new museum buildings, and I think it is still the one that any future museum will have to beat aesthetically, but as a prototype for the perfect museum otherwise, it has developed a couple of imperfections. The only really serious one is that the single most original and aesthetically rewarding element of the design has had to be modified. Originally the shallow barrel vaults (not quite semicircular), which are supported not by the walls beneath them in the usual way, but are rigid, relatively light reinforced concrete units resting on the four piers at the corners of the rectangular galleries, seemed to float—literally float—unsupported, since a long, narrow, continuous space from pier to pier was left open between wall and vault, glazed against the weather but still offering no support. The trouble is that Texas sun is strong stuff, and curators objected that the daylight coming through these long slits—the sunlight, that is, even for brief periods—and falling directly on works of art, could not be tolerated. Hence in some galleries, including the large one where the Japanese sculpture is installed, the open space has had to be blanked out with a material (felt, I think) that continues the shape and color of the vault down to the wall, sealing vault to wall as if the two were a structural unit in conventional fashion. The rooms are still beautiful in proportion, but their magical quality is gone. The second flaw, a forgivable one certainly, is that in its perfection as an aesthetic unit, the building cannot be enlarged, and is already outgrown. It would be a shame to modify it; the only solution will have to be Kimbell II.

"The Great Age of Japanese Buddhist Sculpture," the exhibition's proper title, closes in Fort Worth on October 31, and will have its only other showing anywhere at Japan House Gallery in New York from November 13 to January 16, 1983. I'd like to mention, since Fort Worth is proud of it, and because a good example is set, that the exhibition was made possible by grants from local sources, the Tandy Foundation and Tandy Corporation/Radio Shack. Failing to work up something witty about strange bedfellows, I can only say that in this superb exhibition, medieval Japanese Buddhist sculpture has been excellently served by twentieth-century American electronics and software.

SAVANT OF SIGNS

A Barthes Reader
edited, and with an introduction, by Susan Sontag

(Hill and Wang, 495 pp., $20)

Roland Barthes must be counted the most characteristic and important French intellectual of the structuralist generation that gained worldwide attention starting in the 1960s. By the time of his death in 1980 at age sixty-five—when he was still very much in the midst of a rich and evolving literary career—he was a best-selling author and professor at the Collège de France, that pinnacle of French intellectual institutions. Yet Barthes as intellectual authority—*maître à penser*, as the French tend to say—cut a curious figure. He detested all forms of authority, worried about the power wielded by the teacher, and described his main subject, literature, as "a grand imposture which allows us to understand speech outside the bounds of power, in the splendor of a permanent revolution of language." His temperament and intellectual style were elegant, abstruse, refined, slightly mandarin. He could be assertive, but always in the mode of counterstatement, affirming the inverse of society's accepted dogmas and myths.

The contrast to the previous generation's intellectual leader, Jean-Paul Sartre—ten years older than Barthes, though they died within a few days of each other—is striking, and says something about the preoccupations and sensibility of our time. Barthes did not assert political and moral goals for his contemporaries, he never offered a philosophy nor even a systematic intellectual construct. Working largely in the essay and the fragment, concerned with literature and other forms of discourse set within the broad context of man's sign-making enterprise, Barthes's lesson was ever oblique, cool, implicitly defining the intellectual's mission as one of understanding the tools that he uses—and that perhaps just as much use him. He dreamed of a "vast science" of "the effects of language" that would include the thinker himself within it as one "language effect" among others—thus evacuating ideas of psychological depth in favor of a subjectivity defined purely as the product of a certain *place* in language. From his early essays championing the "blank" writing of an Alain Robbe-Grillet through his elaboration of the fledgling discipline of semiology to his late introspective work, Barthes ever strives to clear out the vestiges of our belief in natural meanings hidden deep within "the Romantic heart of things," making us think instead in terms of formal systems, codes, and messages, focusing always on man as *homo significans*, the maker of meaning through the systematic use of signs.

To Barthes, the mission of the intellectual could never be a straightforward one of providing critique and a program for action if only because writing itself can never have the simplicity of sending and receiving information. Something more is involved whenever writing is formed on the page, or is deciphered in the complex act of reading. In a passage from *The Pleasure of the Text* (1973), Barthes describes how writing creates a text which reflects less a mas-

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tery than a loss of the self and its intentions:

> *Text* means the *Woven;* but whereas up until now this weaving has always been seen as a product, a ready-made veil, behind which lies, more or less hidden, the meaning (truth), now we emphasize, in the weaving, the generative idea that the text constitutes itself, works itself out through a continual network; lost in this weaving—this texture—the subject unmakes himself, like a spider dissolving in the secretions constructing its web. Were we fond of neologisms, we might define the theory of the text as *hyphology* (*hyphos* is the woven and the spiderweb).

This is typical of Barthes, especially of "later Barthes," in the way the very rigor of attention he brings to the processes of language subverts the results usually sought by rigor, opening the analyst himself to an undoing by the phenomenon he is analyzing, opening up the analysis to a kind of intellectual playfulness—what he likes to think of as an erotics of reading—in order to pursue to its outer limits the adventure of the sign.

'A BARTHES READER' offers a rich retrospective of Barthes's work. Susan Sontag has ably selected texts, and given most of them in their entirety. If one misses certain things—fine essays on La Rochefoucauld and La Bruyère and Robbe-Grillet, some selections from what is to me Barthes's very best book, *S/Z* (but how does one excerpt it?), something from the beautiful meditation on Japan, *Empire of Signs* (recently published by Hill and Wang, in a translation by Richard Howard)—these are minor cavils: the *Reader* gives an ample conspectus of Barthes's concerns and his evolution. And Susan Sontag has contributed a prefatory essay which is one of her own finest acts of criticism, informed by intellectual sympathy and a sure sense of the contours of the mind she is describing. The essay abounds with memorable formulations of what Barthes as a writer is like, laced with pertinent quotation and example: signs of spiritual intimacy and affinity that make this one of the best things ever written on Barthes.

Miss Sontag presents an image of Barthes as dandy and aesthete, fascinated by form and dedicated to the elegant ideal of the writer's impersonality, which he progressively subverted as his intellectual quest became more personal and daring. One might object that in her desire to characterize Barthes's mind she pays too little attention to the substance of his critical thought. She wants, perhaps, to see Barthes too much as "author" rather than "writer," to use a distinction formulated by Barthes himself, where "author" has a priestly function, using language "intransitively," for itself, while "writer" rather resembles the clerk, using language in more utilitarian fashion, to make a point. But Barthes notes in the "Authors and Writers" essay that the intellectual of our time is typically, perhaps necessarily, of the "bastard type," the "author-writer," both concerned to say something and to "gain access to the theater of language": asking to be read both as guide to some "tutor text" or system of thought, and for his own sake. Barthes clearly places himself within the bastard group, and indeed his best works—I would put *S/Z* at their apex—are very much bastard productions, combining systematic analytic rigor (in *S/Z*, the sentence-by-sentence reading of a Balzac short story) with exfoliating creative digressions on the act of reading itself.

Miss Sontag calls her prefatory essay "Writing Itself," presumably in translation of the French word *l'écriture*, Barthes's abiding object of scrutiny from his first book, *Writing Degree Zero* (1953), which took issue with some of the simplicities of the Sartrean notion of a "committed literature," on to the autobiographical *Roland Barthes* (1975) and the nearly novelistic *A Lover's Discourse* (1977). (And even before the first book: Miss Sontag resurrects Barthes's first published essay, which turns out—shouldn't one have guessed it?—to be on Gide, with whose mind and project Barthes always felt the closest affinities.) Barthes's understanding of writing was from early on informed by his readings in structural linguistics (and also structural anthropology and psychoanalysis), particularly Saussure and the Russian and Prague formalists. When Saussure declared that "language is form, not substance"—that it creates meaning through internal formal patterns of difference—he set the course for a conceptual revolution, making us understand language as system, and other meaning-creating systems as functionally similar to language. Saussure's formalist gesture at the inauguration of modern linguistics may remind us of the poet Paul Valéry's remark, "What is *form* for others is *content* for me," by which he meant that he found in formal properties, structures of verse, syntax, rhyme, the very subject of his poetic meditations. Barthes similarly formalizes his object of inquiry, seeking to understand the structural constants of all narrative actions, for instance, asking less what the meaning is than how, by what processes, meaning is produced.

BARTHES'S INTEREST in the functioning of the linguistic sign is not simply technical—and he has been much misunderstood by hostile critics, especially Anglo-American ones, who have called him an arid technician of literature. "Sign" is for him very nearly a moralized concept in that it is what one can oppose to "nature," more particularly, to what society and culture have naturalized. Societies have a tendency to create and promote meanings and connotations that come to be accepted as natural, as self-evident, whereas they are in fact the product of sign-systems used by the powerful. Barthes originally labeled such naturalized language "myth," and in his early book *Mythologies* (1957) he sought to understand and describe "how a society produces stereotypes, i.e., triumphs of artifice, which it then consumes as innate meanings, i.e., triumphs of Nature." It is important—intellectually, politically, morally—to understand that these meanings that appear to surface naturally, to be in the realm of the given and irrefutable, are in fact the product of an analyzable grammar and syntax. For nature, says Barthes, is "the last outrage": the place where man hides, and hides from, his responsibility as the maker of meanings.

The unmasking of stereotypes provides a constant source of energy in Barthes's work. One of his favorite words is the Greek *doxa*, meaning the received idea, the common opinion, the cultural stereotype. Opposed to it is the *para-doxa: that which contradicts*, exceeds, outrages the received opinion. And Barthes's arguments often proceed by way of paradox: not dialectics precisely, but a rigorous challenging of the commonplace, a laying-bare of its status as "false nature," forcing us to entertain apparently unreasonable positions, and to recognize the measure of the conventional and the arbitrary in any use of signs. As Miss Sontag notes, Barthes's writing is frequently aphoristic, seeking the pointed and striking conclusive formulation. Aphorism is the tool of the

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paradoxicalist, used to denounce the illusions of complacency and bad faith, to undermine the familiarity of the pseudo-natural. It is one more trait that connects Barthes to the long French *moraliste* tradition, illustrated by such of his preferred authors as La Rochefoucauld, La Bruyère, and Gide who, without the apparatus Barthes derives from linguistics, were like him concerned with reading the signs of the elusive and omnipresent meanings that social man has put into the world.

It is Barthes's ingenious, militant, analytic use of the linguistic concept of the sign as a critical instrument to expose myth and, more generally, to describe culture as a language system, that may finally explain his importance to contemporary thought in a wide variety of fields. For study of the sign becomes, in Barthes's hands, study of the multiple ways in which individuals and collectivities consciously and unconsciously make meaning, and of all the places where made meaning is to be found. Barthes's enterprise here resembles that of Freud, who also worked from the postulate that details and incidents of behavior—especially linguistic behavior—that look like nothing are in fact susceptible of analysis, and turn out to be full of significance. The Freudian study of all those slips known as "parapraxes" (as in *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*) allows Barthes to work from the promise that every set of signs is symptomatic, and that we can say what it means if we can learn to decipher its codes and rhetoric. The unifying focus of Barthes's diverse and somewhat protean work is what has sometimes been called *semiosis*: the universal processes by which meaning is created. The pursuit of this elusive object implies the possibility, perhaps the necessity, of founding a new science of signs, or "semiology."

The idea of a semiology was postulated by Saussure, who predicted that linguistics would one day be simply a branch of this general science of signs. Barthes endeavored to establish the operative principles of semiology in two studies from the middle period of his career, *Elements of Semiology* (1964) and *System of Fashion* (1967), his two most "scientific" works and the two least likely to appeal to the general reader (the latter has never been translated into English). One sees in them Barthes's need, at mid-career, to establish a theoretical basis for his operations, and they do have at least a hygienic value, clearing the ground of a number of false hypotheses, and setting out with considerable clarity the requirements of the field now generally called "semiotics," which in the last decade has developed a full panoply of professional conferences, reviews, and even a few academic departments.

ROLAND BARTHES BY JACK COUGHLIN FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Yet Barthes characteristically refused to become a "semiotician" himself, and turned away from the more systematic and pseudo-scientific manifestations of this new field he had helped to call into existence. When elected to the first Chair of Literary Semiology at the Collège de France, he used his inaugural lecture to dissent from semiology as a science, and to suggest that semiological analysis needs always to be corrected by the creative interplay of literature, by which he means language in its most complex, unpredictable, challenging form: language that will ever escape systematization. Semiology, he said in the inaugural lecture, should never seek to set itself up as the key form of inquiry, but rather should serve in an ancillary capacity, aiding in the understanding of all the disciplines of the word. He offers the hope that his new chair "will be a kind of wheelchair, the wild card of contemporary knowledge, as the sign itself is the wild card of all discourse." Thus in his last major public pronouncement Barthes makes clear his own understanding that what was always most important in his work was less the urge to found new disciplines and hone new methods of analysis than the fascinated quest to be faithful to what he called "the imagination of the sign," as the token that unlocks, opens up the mysteries of our signifying practices.

"Semiology," Barthes announced in the inaugural lecture, "cannot itself be a metalanguage, though at its origin it was entirely so predisposed, since it is a language about languages." This issue of a "metalanguage" runs throughout Barthes's career: is there a language that would permit us to speak neutrally and scientifically *of* language, a privileged position outside our uses of language that would allow us to understand its functioning, and its role in the very definition of the human? Barthes's repeated, resourceful invention of neologisms (most often derived from the Greek), his return to the study of classical rhetoric as a system for classifying elements of discourse, his elaboration of structural models for analyzing material running from the novels of Ian Fleming to the imagined orgies of Sade, his typical procedure of starting an es-

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say by postulating three categories (for understanding the Plates of Diderot's *Encyclopedia*), five codes (of nineteenth-century narrative) and so on, all correspond to a need to locate that Archimedean point at which to stand in order to gain leverage on the worlds of language.

And yet, as Barthes explicitly recognized in *Roland Barthes*, this work was always in the nature of prolegomena to the scientific synthesis yet to come. His readers were given an "introduction to," a "sketch for," or "elements of"—and the big system never came, for the reason that Barthes, while interested in how systems function, remained profoundly suspicious of system itself. And in the introductory essays themselves, the clear categories and definitions always have a way of coming to pieces as one reads on: one comes to realize that they were offered as aids to understanding, not true elements of a metalanguage. Those Barthesian epigones who tried to work from the master's suggestions to the construction of airtight systems ultimately misunderstood Barthes's message. In the inaugural lecture, Barthes laid to rest the very possibility of a metalanguage:

> It is precisely in reflecting on the sign that semiology discovers that every relation of exteriority of one language to another is, *in the long run*, untenable. . . . I cannot function *outside* language, treating it as a target, and *within* language, treating it as a weapon.

This is not to say that one should abandon the enterprise of the metalinguistic, but that it should remain an enterprise, a quest, a testing category of thought—like utopia—and not congeal into a science.

"One must choose between being a terrorist and an egoist," Barthes announced in a seminar near the end of his career. By "terrorism," Barthes means an exclusionary, authoritative and therefore authoritarian use of language, the building of closed systems, speech in the service of power. In a Parisian intellectual milieu where, to outsiders at least, terrorism often seems the only form of discourse that is listened to, this avowal carries poignance and value. By his term of opposition, "egoism," Barthes offered an apologia for his three late, self-reflective books, *Roland Barthes*, *A Lover's Discourse*, and *Camera Lucida* (1980), this last a meditation on the photograph and on death. These are at once the most personal and the most universal of Barthes's writings, the books which made him a best seller in France, someone accessible to readers who had no professional interest in literary criticism or semiology. They are worthy contributions to the great French tradition of "egoism," running from Montaigne through Pascal, Rousseau, Stendhal, and Gide (to name only the summits), where the introspection of one man is carried forward with such force and integrity that we can assent to Montaigne's famous remark, that "Each man bears the entire form of the human condition."

Particularly since the abiding theme of the last three books is desire—sexual, sensual, desire for the pleasures of the world and for the love of another—they project a human vulnerability that is the very antithesis of terrorism. Yet since these books have sometimes been treacherously overpraised—praised in order to denigrate Barthes's earlier productions—two points need to be made. One is that even in these personal books, Barthes's optic on himself and the world remains language: desire seized in language, the discourse of passion, the representation of death. The

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sign remains the key to intellectual probity, and to the possibility of a universalistic discourse. The second point is that the "autobiographical Barthes" makes sense, and interests us, because of the earlier work: his phenomenology of his own mind and body and imaginings depends on the accumulated production that precedes it. Only the great and acknowledged teacher of men can interest us in the source and feel of his ideas.

TO READ THROUGH *A Barthes Reader* is finally to be left with the image of Barthes as one of the great public teachers of our time, someone who thought out, argued for, and made available several steps in a penetrating reflection on language, sign systems, texts—and what they have to tell us about the concept of the human. His work is always partial, passionate underneath its cool, and preliminary, ready to be superseded or contradicted, perhaps in the next essay by Barthes himself. Yet its pedagogical power is durable. A number of his *Critical Essays*—on modern and particularly on classical writers—stand as models of radical and pertinent revaluation. Two short books, *Michelet* (a study of the great French historian) and *Empire of Signs* have a finished perfection that has made them classics. And the other mixed productions, *Mythologies*, *The Pleasure of the Text*, *Sade/Fourier/Loyola*, and perhaps especially *S/Z*, stand, in all their imperfection, as among the very most nourishing intellectual fare of our time. Taken together, they constitute the best *teaching* that we have of what it means to read: of what happens, and what is at stake, when we open ourselves to the full play of language in its most complex, indeterminate, concerted, and disconcerting form, in the reading of texts.

"I have a malady," Barthes writes in *Roland Barthes*, "I *see* language." His eminently successful enterprise was to make us see it, too, and to make us participants in what he believed to be the animating passion of reading: "the passion for, and of, meaning . . . the adventure of language."

PETER BROOKS

Peter Brooks is professor of French and comparative literature at Yale University.

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THE AUTHORITARIAN CENTURY

Modern Authoritarianism: A Comparative Institutional Analysis by Amos Perlmutter

(Yale University Press, 192 pp., $17.50)

Dictatorships and Double Standards: Rationalism and Reason in Politics by Jeane J. Kirkpatrick

(Simon and Schuster, 270 pp., $15.50)

In the twentieth century new forms of authoritarianism have become dominant in major parts of the world. They have little in common with traditional authority, such as that of monarchy. Though some rely on tradition and religion, the most salient examples base themselves on mass mobilization, appeals to nationalism, radical new ideologies, and elaborate new institutional mechanisms.

Prior to World War I clear concepts of authoritarian rule, aside from monarchies, hardly existed, and most of the new authoritarian regimes in Europe found it difficult to define adequate new theories to legitimate themselves. Even the vaunted Marxist concept of "dictatorship of the proletariat" had remained vague and undeveloped before Lenin first began to put the Bolshevik dictatorship into practice. The first Communists in power, like the first Fascists, do not seem to have understood very clearly what it was they were about.

In 1920 almost every independent state in the world lived under some sort of parliamentary constitutional system, but by the eve of World War II a bare majority of European states were governed by overtly authoritarian systems, while most Latin American states had just passed through a new wave of military regimes. Nor did the defeat of the Axis in World War II improve the overall situation. In Eastern Europe rightist authoritarian regimes were simply replaced by Communist systems, and within the following generation authoritarian rule multiplied in the new states of the third world. In one form or another, authoritarianism has become the predominant political mode of the twentieth century.

This has perplexed observers in Western countries, the one part of the world at least partially immune from such contagion. Ethnocentric liberal democratic culture stemming from the nineteenth century offers little in the way of understanding, and a rather bewildering variety of conjectures, theories, explanations, and policy mutations have resulted from the efforts of Americans and other Westerners to come to grips with such realities. Until 1941 there was at least some tendency to deprecate all the dictatorships. During the first year of World War II the British and French governments correctly viewed Nazism, Fascism, and Soviet Communism all as enemies and adversaries, albeit in varying degree. At that point much opinion in the United States seems to have shared this attitude.

The problem of discrimination became acute at the end of 1941 when the German invasion of Russia and the Japanese attack on the United States first made it feasible to align the Western democracies and one of the major dictatorships on the same side. This led to several years of wishful thinking in which it was frequently alleged that the Stalinist regime was ceasing to be either Communist or dictatorial. Such attitudes came full circle, of course, with the cold war, as the Soviet regime was once more recognized as a form of "totalitarianism" approximately equal to that of Nazi Germany, while more moderate right-wing authoritarian states, previously ostracized as "Fascist" or something equivalent, began to be at least partially accepted as useful associates in common opposition to the greater menace. The problem of discrimination and possible double standards—one for our allies, one for whomever happens to be our enemy of the moment—that first emerged in 1941 has been with us ever since.

Until the era of detente in the 1970s, American policy did have a certain kind of consistency. It firmly opposed all Communist regimes with the sole exception of the independent and anti-Soviet government of Yugoslavia, while taking a much more benign approach to most non-Communist authoritarian regimes. This was normally justified more on pragmatic than on theoretical grounds and always drew a certain amount of criticism from American liberals, however muted at times.

Detente, particularly as practiced by the Carter Administration, revealed some tendency to reverse this. China became a friend and the Soviet Union the object of increased trade and cooperation, while United States policy toward a number of right-wing authoritarian regimes became overtly hostile. The new orientation even assumed a kind of vague theoretical definition. Jimmy Carter could reject "inordinate fear of Communism" on the grounds that the Soviet Union was oriented toward peace and progress, whereas repressive right-wing and racist regimes were reactionary and opposed to progress and detente.

THIS IS THE KIND of problem addressed by Jeane Kirkpatrick's *Dictatorship and Double Standards*, a collection of her recent articles on foreign policy and on domestic politics. The article by the same name which appeared in *Commentary* in November 1979 is generally credited with helping to win her the appointment as United States Ambassador to the United Nations. In this and in a second article on Latin American policy in *Commentary*, Ambassador Kirkpatrick, then professor of political science at Georgetown, tellingly lambasted the failures of Carter Administration foreign policy, particularly its pressure against the Somoza regime, which seemed to contradict the Administration's own avowed "hands-off" policy.

The deeper theoretical point which she made in the 1979 articles and elsewhere dealt with the distinction between totalitarian and authoritarian regimes, the former implacable, aggressive, and mostly Communist, the latter limited, more moderate, relatively inactive in foreign affairs, and mostly rightist. Ambassador Kirkpatrick did not suggest that the United States simply endorse and support authoritarian regimes, but did propose that they might

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be sometimes congruent with American policy interest and also susceptible to reform; she concluded that it was a grave mistake to rebuff or destabilize a moderate authoritarian system that might well be replaced by a more militant and aggressive totalitarian one. Most liberal commentators tended to reject this distinction as either byzantine and meaningless or, more commonly, as dangerously biased.

KIRKPATRICK'S main concern was not typology but policy, though the two are inevitably related. The reverse is true of Amos Perlmutter's new analysis of *Modern Authoritarianism*, which attempts a comparative institutional typology of this world political phenomenon. Perlmutter, professor of sociology and political science at American University, is correct in believing that an adequate work of this sort does not exist, and he has gone at least part of the way in supplying us with one.

His goal is the analysis of the institutional basis and functioning of modern authoritarianism, that is, the mass-based, frequently revolutionary, and putatively modernizing regimes of the twentieth century, which have little in common with absolutist or oligarchic premodern monarchial or other authoritarian systems. Moreover, Perlmutter is correct in emphasizing the inadequacy of much of the previous approach to this problem, which relies on definition of ideology, discussion of historical origins or goals, imputation of class relationships, or mere stress on the role of police repression. Perlmutter insists that the nature and function, as well as the relative historical success and failure, of modern authoritarian systems can only be understood in terms of their institutional structure and dynamics, and it is in this area that he makes his main contribution.

Perlmutter divides modern authoritarian systems into five types: bolshevik, Nazi, Fascist, corporatist, and praetorian (that is, military-dominated). The Nazi and Fascist types refer to individual regimes only, while bolshevik is the historically strategic term that Perlmutter applies to the standard Leninist-Stalinist Communist regime. Corporatist governments are the type found in eastern and southern Europe in the 1930s and in parts of Latin America today.

Useful as this analysis is, it amounts to a book-length essay rather than a thorough scholarly treatment. Though

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A Bad Year

Amnesty International Report 1981

To read Amnesty International's 1981 report (426 pp., $6.95) on the use by governments of political imprisonment, torture, and executions, and on efforts to halt such practices, is to immerse oneself deeply in depression and despair.

It is hard to say where the grimmest spot on this benighted globe might be. Race, color, creed, and size of country don't necessarily come into it. In Guinea a number of political prisoners were released, some of whom had been held for almost ten years, but this act drew attention to the fact that nothing was being said about the fate of several hundred others. For them there were "grave fears." In Angola a prisoner who had appealed against a long prison sentence had it changed to a death penalty. The South African authorities continued to use detention without trial extensively as a measure against critics and opponents, including children under sixteen.

Those were aspects of the dark continent. In the even darker Americas the spirit of Simon Bolivar seems to have "disappeared"—the AI report puts the word in quotation marks to indicate that most disappearances, in such countries as Argentina (where there were 6,800), Brazil, Chile, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Paraguay, and Uruguay, were the work of security forces or others operating with their governments' complicity. Trying to flee one's own country didn't always help. Hundreds of people, mostly women and children, were reported to have been shot by Salvadoran troops, with the cooperation of Honduran forces, when the refugees tried to cross a river from El Salvador into Honduras.

In Asia a similar story: Taiwan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei, and Singapore are cited for their habit of keeping people in prolonged imprisonment, in numerous cases without trial. The Koreas, North and South, give one little grounds for choice, except that information about the North is clearly harder to come by: events there are covered in one page of the report, while South Korea has seven. In India police brutality continued to be widespread, and deaths in police custody are frequent. In Varanasi twelve men alleged that their legs were broken by the police. Krishna Muraru Singh, 29, stated that on July 21, 1979,

> I was stretched on the floor. . . . two people were standing on my thighs and stamping. Then two persons caught hold of my left foot and began lifting it upwards. One person kicked my knee joint viciously, breaking the kneecap. Then a policeman's boots repeatedly pounded my damaged left knee. . . . Somebody . . . lifted my leg and rotated it in a clockwise direction.

The police denied the charges.

To move on to the Middle East and North Africa is not to make any improvement. There were seven hundred executions during the year in Iran, a figure (the report says) that must be regarded as a minimum. In Iraq torture and poisoning; in Israel secret military trials and army brutality; in Syria increasing arbitrary imprisonment and torture; in Morocco disappearances; in Libya official demands for the "physical liquidation of the enemies of the revolution" and the subsequent killing or wounding of a number of Libyan citizens abroad.

Europe is a region in this report that perforce includes the U.S.S.R. Here, says Amnesty, conditions in collective labor colonies and prisons continue to be characterized by chronic hunger, overwork, inadequate medical treatment, and arbitrary deprivation of the limited rights to correspondence and family visits. Soviet prisoners include members of groups set up to monitor Soviet observance of the human rights provisions of the Helsinki Agreement, signed by the Soviet government. They also include the members of many religious groups who reject the restrictions imposed by the state on religious activity. In the U.S.S.R. and in Romania, political prisoners continued to be confined and treated in psychiatric hospitals.

In Western Europe terrorism has brought problems in its wake for even the liberal democracies, and Amnesty warns of the erosion of the criminal justice system by emergency legislation, which "has tended to make inroads on precisely those legal structures which are crucial to the fairness of the particular criminal justice process."

What conclusions can one draw from this report? Terror and torture appear to have a democracy of their own: governments in many parts of the world apply them to all kinds of people, all wage groups, ages, and professions, to film directors, priests, journalists, engineers, academics, politicians, nurses, peasants, photographers, scientists, children; no one is safe. Modern methods are in use, including drugs and electricity, but so is a full range of primeval physical and mental horror, by water, weight, fire, rape, and beatings—in Liberia a fan belt, in Albania a gravel-filled rubber hose, in Haiti sticks.

According to Amnesty, there were apparent steps forward in the year under review. Some political prisoners were released. Slavery was declared abolished in Mauritania. In Tanzania twelve police officers were sent to jail for five to eight year terms for torturing and killing prisoners in 1976. The notorious Emperor Bokassa of the Central African Republic was sentenced to death in his absence. The Costa Rican Ambassador in Guatemala gave asylum to a young Guatemalan medical student whom plainclothes military intelligence agents had tried to kidnap. There are few such heroes in this report. There is also perhaps a paucity of victims who are named and whose ordeals are given their full due. But this is a report that tries to to justice to thousands in all parts of the world, and although one can assume that there are Timermans and Bukovskys among them who, if they live, will tell their own eloquent tales, one must in the meantime be grateful for a work like this, which behooves one to read into it all the identity and humanity these prisoners have lost.

Anthony Bailey

Anthony Bailey is the author of *Acts of Union: Reports on Ireland, 1973-79* (Random House), and other books.

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it defines its basic models fairly adequately, and also treats part of the relationship of authoritarianism to development, it fails to deal effectively with such key dimensions as historical opinions and dynamics, the political economy of authoritarianism per se, or the relationship of various kinds of authoritarianism to patterns of foreign relations and military conflict.

ON THE QUESTION of totalitarianism, Perlmutter is negative but ambiguous. In general he agrees with the political analysts—now a majority—who no longer find the concept useful and do not employ it in scholarly discussion. They maintain, and Perlmutter essentially agrees, that changes in the Soviet and other Communist systems during the past generation have resulted in the emergence of limited autonomies and group competition that make totalitarian a less than accurate descriptive term. Perlmutter emphasizes that the Soviet Union, like other authoritarian states, employs a variety of institutions and finds it difficult, not to say impossible, to program all of these centrally. Thus he argues that totalitarianism is basically an ideological aspiration of the revolutionary psyche, whether Marxist or Fascist, but one that because of inevitable structural limitations cannot normally be put into practice.

At the same time, he qualifies this interpretation in several crucial ways. Perlmutter does recognize that the Bolshevik or Communist type regime, as distinct from most other more limited authoritarianisms, attempts to organize the entire state and all other institutions through central planning and domination by the party itself, and that under Stalin such efforts were substantially successful. Thus there is, even in Perlmutter's own analysis, a crucial difference between the Bolshevik model and other types of regimes, but the most he is willing to concede is that there may have been a genuine totalitarian phase under Stalin, from which current Soviet political dynamics tend more and more to differentiate themselves. And indeed that probably comes as near a consensus of contemporary scholarly opinion as any brief statement can.

Is this approach to characterizing totalitarianism empirically accurate and reliable? The very etymology of the term "totalitarian" is strange enough. Benito Mussolini and Giovanni Gentile are normally given credit for first beginning to use it at the start of the Italian Fascist regime in 1925, though it was apparently coined by a leftist critic of Fascism two years earlier. It did not constitute part of the original Fascist ideology, but was adopted by Mussolini as a sort of goal and, even more, propaganda slogan. After the association of Italy and Germany in 1936, it was increasingly applied as both a positive and a pejorative adjective to the Hitler regime, though normally not by Nazis themselves. By the time World War II began, it had become a standard term of opprobrium in the lexicon of opponents of the Axis.

Yet totalitarianism only became a serious object of study some time later, in the work of such scholars as Hannah Arendt and Carl J. Friedrich during the 1950s and early 1960s. This led to some surprises, for Arendt had quickly to concede that the relatively limited and easygoing Mussolini regime completely failed to achieve any structural or political totalitarianism—a point on which nearly all serious scholars of Fascist Italy are now in agreement. Moreover, by the 1960s the new generation of researchers in the history of Nazi Germany were placing more emphasis on the internal contradictions, conflicts and limitations of Hitler's regime, which began to look more like a rigorous personal tyranny based on political police than a system of thorough institutional totalitarianism. Arendt herself reached this conclusion, recognizing that full totalitarianism in Germany only began to be approached under the total mobilization of the last year of the war and was more a possibility of the future of the Hitler regime than an accurate description of its contradictory and sometimes chaotic institutional structure. By process of elimination, genuine functional totalitarianism came to refer above all to the Soviet Union, and de-Stalinization and detente finally began to put an end to the practice.

NONETHELESS, serious analysts such as Perlmutter have to admit that there is something very different and far-reaching about the Soviet system and those modeled on it. No other kind of system aims at, and largely achieves, relatively total and simultaneous control of all the main institutions and functions of society—the political structure, the economy, culture, religion, and the military. The fact that different sectors of the Communist elite since the death of Stalin have had different notions of how to go about this does not obviate such a fundamental fact, which gets to the essence of Communist institutional structure as contrasted with all other kinds of authoritarianism. The term "totalitarianism" is therefore not merely pejorative rhetoric nor a propaganda tool but a technical, descriptive term used to describe a concrete and specific kind of system. Its use need not, indeed does not, presuppose some sort of superhuman efficiency on the part of totalitarian rulers to control monolithically every single aspect of their society, something obviously beyond the grasp of any human agency. Since the majority of serious students of Soviet-type systems would at least agree that they have gone much further toward the achievement of that goal than has any other kind of state, it is hard to resist the conclusion that the concept of totalitarianism more nearly describes the unique difference of the Soviet system than any single alternative.

If then, for the sake of argument, the accuracy of the term totalitarianism might be temporarily granted, the next objection would probably be, what dif-

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ference does it make? To return to the argument of Ambassador Kirkpatrick, it is, briefly put, that totalitarian (i.e., Communist) regimes are 1) much more aggressive and militaristic, hence more of a danger to their neighbors and to the world; 2) more brutal and repressive, destroying or driving out much larger numbers of people, adding to the toll of genocide and refugee problems; and 3) more insidious because they are much less susceptible to fundamental reform and reversal. The conclusion that Ambassador Kirkpatrick—and two earlier decades of American policymakers—drew from this is that right-wing authoritarian regimes, though not good in themselves, can be dealt with on a much more acceptable and profitable basis. She emphasizes that it is a mistake to consider that anything is better and nothing worse than a rightist dictatorship, since there is clearly something that may be a good deal worse.

Conversely, in a stimulating and cogent article "Totalitarianism vs. Authoritarianism" (*TNR, July 4 & 11*, 1981), Michael Walzer disputed the accuracy of the differentiation as applied to these primary characteristics. Without denying the analytical distinction between totalitarian and authoritarian regimes, Walzer replied that the latter also provoke wars and are sometimes capable of a Communist level of brutality, while in some cases Communist regimes (Eastern Europe and perhaps China) have shown themselves susceptible to not insignificant reform.

Depending on how the argument is qualified, both are correct, up to a point. As Hitler found to his dismay, no other system has the kind of built-in military potential of a Communist system. The proportion of resources dedicated to military growth by Communist regimes is comparatively the highest in the world, equaled only by Israel. Yet two of the three wars of the first half of 1982 have been initiated by authoritarian (in Perlmutter's typology, praetorian) regimes, those of Iraq and Argentina. If Soviet totalitarianism is the primary military threat to the future of the human race, it would still be a mistake to underestimate the capacity of the authoritarian regimes for international mischief, on which in turn the Soviet Union most frequently capitalizes.

Communist totalitarianism wins the prize for bloodshed; Stalin killed more civilians than Hitler. Moreover, the recent history of Cambodia demonstrates that the genocidal propensity of Communism was no mere "accident" of one aberrant Russian dictator, but a latent political and structural possibility of this type of system. Yet in formerly Spanish Equatorial Guinea, the brief but extraordinarily bloodthirsty regime of Macías (presumably, in Perlmutter's typology, a semi-praetorian "kleptocracy") may have liquidated nearly 10 percent of the population and driven many more into exile. Wars between non-Communist regimes have also produced many refugees. The present American immigration problem does not primarily derive from Cuban totalitarianism but from the badly mismanaged society and economy of semi-authoritarian Mexico. The latter, in turn, tries to protect its own flank by supporting Castro, however much it may have to lose from such a policy in the long run.

On the third point, less qualification is required. Countries such as Hungary, Poland, and Czechoslovakia would indeed immediately renounce Communism, or at least anything remotely approaching its Soviet form, if ever given the chance. Yet this fact is somewhat misleading in that they have never been independent Communist regimes but simply Russian conquests. To say that they might reform or renounce Communism is merely to say that they would be very much interested in regaining their independence. Communism in those countries (with the partial exception of Czechoslovakia) had little to do with politics; it was a matter of military occupation. The only genuine kind of reformed Communism is that of Yugoslavia, though Hungary has registered notable innovations in the economic sphere and China has demonstrated that significant change may be possible elsewhere as well. Authoritarian regimes, by comparison, are much weaker and more easily mutable, and few last more than a decade or so. Since, however, they rarely correct the problems that caused them in the first place, they are rarely replaced by Western-type democracies. But that they are more easily corrigible or replaceable is beyond question.

In the final analysis, Ambassador Kirkpatrick's argument is, in my judgment, largely correct but inadequately

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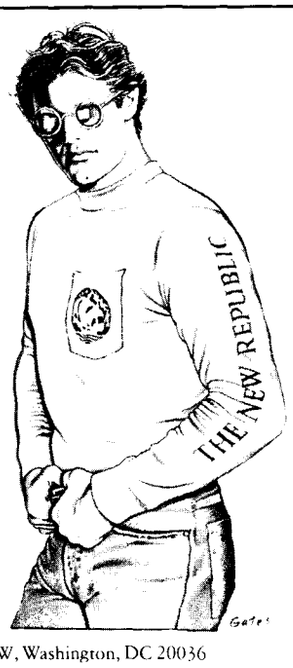

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qualified. Her critics have chosen to read it as a general defense of right-wing authoritarianism and a proposal that the United States should normally embrace regimes of that sort. No such categorical policy is at all desirable, any more than a categorical policy of always refusing to negotiate or cooperate with totalitarian regimes would be desirable. A clear distinction should be made between fostering or helping to originate supposedly friendly dictatorships as compared with a realistic approach toward those that are strongly established. Sharp critical assessments are frequently required of aspects of our relations with major Western democracies, for the form of regime by itself never guarantees congruence with American interests or even, on occasion, values. All the more, then, relations with any dictatorship of whatever ilk need to be carefully assessed in terms of overall advantages, liabilities, and alternatives. This, of course, is what the Carter Administration did *not* do, though it is not clear that the Reagan policymakers have worked out a coherent and i.e. effective alternative course.

ONE OF THE MOST inexorable realities that we face is the implacable nature of Communist totalitarianism. To deal with this requires as much strength and firmness as it does tact, sensitivity, and willingness to negotiate. It seems very difficult for successive American administrations to maintain from one period to the next the kind of vigorous and balanced policy that is necessary to achieve success. A land war in Asia was combined almost at one and the same time with a highly indulgent program of detente; the virtual complacency of Carter has been followed by the hostile yet uncertain rhetoric of his successor.

It is true enough that recent American government has sometimes failed to take totalitarianism seriously and has further destabilized international relations by an unrealistic attitude toward more moderate authoritarian regimes. What this underscores is not so much the need for a political taxonomist, useful though taxonomy is, as the need for a coherent and consistent overall strategy and world policy. It may be that the American political culture, with its limited sense of history and zeal for short-term pragmatic solutions that provide a quick electoral payoff (though frequently miscalculated even in the short-run), simply cannot generate and sustain a broad and consistent overall strategy. Though pessimists have been telling us this for a number of years, it should not be too late to try. Such an effort will require a clear-minded and critical approach to both Communist totalitarianism and moderate rightist regimes. The most recent overture to Castro, combined with the disillusionment about Galtieri, may be indicators of a more imaginative and comprehensive policy. Communism cannot simply be defeated; it has to be both worked with and firmly resisted at the same time. Rightist regimes may often merit cooperation and sometimes support, just as Tito's Communism was supported, but only on the basis of a clear consideration of the alternatives. When all is said and done, the main requirement of foreign policy is not that it be pro-left or pro-right, but that it be carefully realistic and well calculated to serve the long-range national interest.

STANLEY G. PAYNE

Stanley G. Payne is Hilldale Professor of History at the University of Wisconsin.

COMING OF AGE IN THE 1950s

The Woods
by David Plante

(Atheneum, 160 pp., $9.95)

Daniel Francouer is eighteen, a freshman at Boston College; the time is the late 1950s; school and the Army, marriage and raising a family, what the 1950s canonized as "normality," stretch before him. More pall than promise. Daniel wants a different life, "where nothing that could happen did happen," and this mysterious short novel mirrors his efforts to realize his longings and escape from them.

The Woods is the third novel in a triptych about Daniel and his large French-Catholic family; its predecessors were *The Country* (1981) and the award-winning *The Family* (1978). The setting throughout is Providence, Rhode Island and its bosky environs, a rare fictional venue. *The Woods* too is a triptych: three spare scenes from a year in Daniel's life. In the first panel Daniel and his college roommate go to a dance, have a few beers at a bar; next day they take Communion together then visit the Boston museum; and that is the action. The focus is on Daniel's consciousness, specifically on his preoccupation with "the space, large and empty" which he sees behind people as a kind of enveloping presence. (It is a version of the existentialist notion of "the encompassing," and while Daniel is drawn toward it as to a great mystery, readers who think existentialism vaporous will not pass page two.) Receiving Communion, Daniel has a vision of this space as the Body of Christ, an immense home for all the little wanderers of being, for his parents, brothers, roommate, the lot. More often, he is not sure what the space is; it is just there, metaphysical weather. It makes him bad company. Yet he envies those who have "a world outside them to which they are naturally, unself-consciously dedicated, beyond which they do not imagine, or need to imagine, any other world." Looking in a mirror, he ruminates, "No, not mine, not my body, but a body beyond the body to which my body would be drawn, in which would be everything." Daniel wants to merge with the whole, to make of being a family. *The Woods* is about the adolescent dread of selfhood and its loneliness.

The second panel is a flashback to the summer before Daniel entered college. The setting is the lake where Daniel's family vacations. (Readers of *The Country* will remember Daniel's search for the spirit of his dead father in the surrounding woods.) Again the action is sparse. Over the summer Daniel has a nearly fleshless romance with an older woman from across the lake. He takes a job in Providence as a human ad for a peanut shop. Back at the lake, more

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from loneliness than lust, he makes love to the woman. She pleads with him to come out of his secret world. He does, but waveringly.

A sense of portent grows when we encounter sentences like: "He knew he must be saved, but he did not know what he must be saved from." The rhythm of the prose adds to the aura of strangeness: "Then the beams revealed, in the grey circle, trees, and a knoll above the trees, and on the knoll a house." "He closed his eyes so he not saw but sensed radiant about his head a bright redness in which white points flashed." These Gerard Manley Hopkins touches possess their own beauty, an insistently mannered one. Moreover, this fictional world is so constructed that everyone in it has a touch of Daniel's cosmic loneliness; and so the older woman rather too easily accepts this moody brooder as he is. They also engage in a disconcertingly metaphorical dialogue about Daniel's "dark woods" that rivals Bergman at his explicit worst. Plante once wrote a novel called *The Ghost of Henry James* and what E. M. Forster said of The Master applies to him as well: most of life has to drop away before he will do us a novel. The range of emotion and experience in Plante's art is narrow; the depth of insight within that limit, often profound.

In the first panel the unity Daniel longs for, the "space, large and empty," is the Body of Christ; and in the second, it is a woman's body; in the third, history is the larger life beyond his life. Titled "The War," this section is moving as the others are not. The war—World War II and its spawn, the cold war—enter Daniel's world through his older brother Albert, a Marine Corps major who visits the lake during the summer between Daniel's freshman and sophomore years. While Albert and his fellow major, Burt, are at the lake Daniel fills out his Selective Service Registration card: a conscientious objecter. Albert is a theological anti-Communist: he fought the Japanese and he will fight the godless Russians at national need. Yet he is sympathetic when Daniel tells him his decision on the draft. Daniel says that he was born during the greatest war in history, that he remembers it, and rages against it. Albert agrees that Daniel must follow his conscience. But, Albert says, there will always be war, whatever Daniel feels or does.

Months pass; Daniel is at school expecting a visit from Debbie, the teenage sister of the woman with whom he had his summer romance. Debbie has bad news from his family: Albert's friend, Burt, has killed himself. At the lake Burt had said that the Marine Corps "is not a world to be in." Like Daniel he wanted to escape, and did escape. Back at college, Daniel finds a letter from Albert. It includes an allowance, for Albert pays Daniel's tuition, and it hints that Daniel has been denied conscientious objector status. The letter is full of sad truth:

> You wanted your objection to be taken seriously, and it wasn't. You hate war. You are right to hate it. But we hate what we most long for, and your hatred against what we long for will not change the world. You want a different world, but the fact is you must live and die in this. When war is declared, you must be included, you have no choice. It is as if the longing of the world existed apart from you, a great space around you, and you must submit to it. Your private longing may be to live, but that counts for nothing. You cannot escape the world and its public longing. You may try to fight the longings of the world, but you will not succeed in defeating them. You must bear the world. I do. I bear it less well in peace than in war, because I know that we destroy ourselves more in peace than in war and in war you are allowed to hate. I bear a world I hate. And you will.

Daniel, outside the mailroom, "thought, as if he were deeply embarrassed, that it should be possible to leave oneself and walk away." He starts toward his room: "The drill field was white, and as he crossed it, it appeared to him that the snow did not fall, but rose from it." We note the drill field, harbinger of his future. The snow above and below figures the ineluctable life in history which is "the final space, large and empty" that contains Daniel, a dark woods indeed.

JACK BEATTY

"NON-READERS OF *National Review* will have missed our coverage of the Mexican crisis that has now arrived (see George Byram Lake's 'Nothing Ever Happens In Mexico. . .' June 11, and 'On the Right', September 17). The media in general have done an ingenious job of describing and analyzing the crisis without mentioning socialism, which is rather like writing about the problems of the Middle Ages without mentioning the Black Death."

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A Reply To Paul Fussell.

SCHOOLS FOR SNOBBERY, II

In "Schools for Snobbery," (TNR, October 4) Paul Fussell makes two points about academic life in this country. 1) In America, where the Constitution prohibited a nobility, the higher education system has served to develop and perpetuate significant social and economic distinctions in our presumably egalitarian society. An elite few institutions, most of them old Eastern establishments, have been elevated as founts of honor, conferring prestige and power on those privileged to attend. 2) Rather than increasing social mobility, the expansion of opportunities for higher education since World War II has only spread the myth of the cachet of "the college diploma"—without making the myth a reality. The new colleges and universities crowding the country possess merely the rituals but not the quality of the Harvards, Yales, and Princetons. Thus has arisen, Mr. Fussell maintains, a tacit conspiracy not to criticize a mediocre network of American schools lest we reveal the true hierarchy beneath the pretensions—the continued domination by the Ivy League. Mr. Fussell believes that Edward Fiske's "selective" guide to colleges courageously challenges the smug satisfaction of administrators, faculty, and students and their illusions of status, and he himself undertakes to expose the conspiracy further.

Both Mr. Fussell's and Mr. Fiske's challenges, however, are open to serious questions. They may well be right that standards of higher education in this country are insufficiently scruti-

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nized, but neither of them comes forward with a coherent set of criteria.

In assuming the elite Ivy League schools award the only "real" diplomas, Mr. Fussell misjudges the network of state universities, state colleges, and less well-known private institutions around the country, especially in the Midwest, South, and Far West. He overlooks the fact that in the Kennedy-Johnson years, the graduate schools of our best universities expanded rapidly, turning out an unprecedented number of gifted young professors. Since the elite institutions did not significantly expand their undergraduate enrollments in the baby-boom years, young scholars whose training would likely have earned them a position at one of the time-honored institutions Mr. Fussell consistently invokes instead found themselves teaching in North Dakota, West Texas, Nebraska, and the University of Oklahoma.

Further, Mr. Fussell seems unaware that not every gifted student goes to Harvard, Yale, Princeton, or Stanford—that in fact not every gifted student wants to. With the expansion of access to higher education, many students have chosen local colleges, and now that the Reagan Administration has reversed a twenty-year trend of extending the opportunity to young people to go away to college, we can expect to see a marked increase in regional attendance. It will be more difficult for the Harvards and Stanfords to have first pick of the best of our high school graduates, especially if they come from families with incomes below $24,000.

Mr. Fussell also seems to have completely ignored the fact that for decades our great state universities have been the equal of the prestigious institutions he keeps talking about. No serious scholar would ever deny the title of "university" to Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois, Texas, Indiana, to name just a few. Mr. Fussell's parody about an imaginary provincial university press might sound less convincing when one considers that the press at the University of Oklahoma (an institution maligned by Mr. Fussell) has published, among other books, a major lexicon of the Homeric dialect, the best textbook of Homeric Greek, and the Brahms-Billroth correspondence.

The fatal aspect of Mr. Fussell's argument, however, is his misplaced regard for Edward Fiske's *Selective Guide to Colleges*. Large classes, messy registration, inconsistent and often unrigorous admission standards, "big" varsity sports, and too much teaching performed by the graduate assistants—the complaints voiced in the guide by students at Syracuse University, whom Mr. Fussell quotes—are complaints that could perfectly well be leveled against Harvard, Stanford, and Berkeley, all of which received five-star academic ratings. The students at Syracuse, many of whom applied to more prestigious institutions and did not get in, express anger and self-doubt by reacting legitimately but more vociferously to the institutional evils they encounter. The student at Harvard, basking in the bestowal of prestige on himself, might well be expected to suffer in silence the inefficiencies, corruptions, and bad habits that can make Syracuse and Harvard appear more alike than they are different. It's far from clear that the five-star academic rating was based on as serious an analysis as Mr. Fussell and Mr. Fiske would like us to believe (though at least in one case, St. John's College in Annapolis, even Mr. Fiske was wise enough to confer five stars for academics on a school whose faculty, student body, and resources don't measure up by conventional standards). In general, however, the entire rating system, modeled on the *Michelin Guide*, which assumes the "amount of social life that is readily available" is a criterion equal to academics is ridiculous; five stars in the social life category (lots of parties) might well not be a promising sign at all. What few facts—SAT averages, etc.—the guide does provide, it often gets wrong.

Instead of computing senseless academic ratings, the guide should have attempted to answer some basic questions about academic quality: What is demanded of the student by the curricula in different fields? What kind of students have done well? What are the range and character of the teaching? Who are the faculty for different levels of undergraduate study? For chatty comments about sex life on campus, one would be better off using the *Insider's Guide* written by the student staff of *The Yale Daily News*, which is unpretentious, far better written, and more candid and accurate. For essential facts, *Barron's* is more complete, reliable, and readable.

LEON BOTSTEIN

Leon Botstein is president of Bard College.

CORRESPONDENCE, *from page 4*

not mean that Buber is no scholar, as Bloom states, or even that he is no scholar of Hasidism. Scholem himself says that no one denies Buber an exact knowledge of the sources, and Scholem's critique, as I show in my chapter, is equally one-sided. Incidentally, Bloom is wrong to say that Buber died without having forgiven Scholem. Buber was, in fact, proud of him. After one public criticism by Scholem, Buber said privately to Ernst Simon, "He may say of me what he likes. Who else has a former disciple who has founded a whole new field of scholarship!"

Bloom claims that "Scholem's Jewish Gnosticism is both more securely founded in Jewish spiritual history and more adequate to a post-Holocaust Jewry than Buber's earlier version of a Jewish religious anarchism." It is precisely this question that has led me to present not just a synthesis of Buber's intellectual position, but a "dialography," showing Buber's thought growing out of the events of his own life, including the Holocaust and even his confrontation with Scholem.

MAURICE FRIEDMAN
San Diego State University
San Diego, California

CLASS REUNION

To the editors:

The 50th anniversary reunion of the veterans of Norman Thomas's Socialist campaign for the Presidency in 1932 will be held on November 19 and 20, 1982, at the Norman Thomas High School, 111 East 33rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10016. Those who were involved in that or other Norman Thomas campaigns may secure information on the reunion by writing to me at the school.

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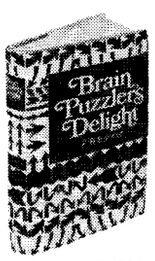

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SANTA FE DIARIST

City of Dreams

HALF A CENTURY ago, pale-faced strangers like Mabel Dodge and D. H. Lawrence came to northern New Mexico in search of ancient gods and noble savages. Today their followers are looking for a real estate deal and a mellow lifestyle. All of a sudden, Santa Fe, for years the haven of ne'er-do-well sons, second-string painters, and restless divorcées, is *le dernier cri*. Just check with *People* magazine and *Esquire*. Hollywood literati and Oklahoma oil barons have descended upon this pokey town a thousand miles from nowhere, snatching up mud adobe houses and embellishing them with the fantasies of Scottsdale decorators.

WHY DO THEY COME? Some for the setting. The city—a sprawling agglomeration of some fifty thousand souls—sits on a sun-baked plateau seven thousand feet above sea level. The air is bracing, the nights are cool even after the hottest summer day, the transparency of the light rivals that of Greece, and the sky seems to go on forever. One can sit in the sun and watch a rainstorm fifty miles away in one direction and a triple rainbow over the mountains on the other side. The town, still relatively unspoiled by developers, has a certain monotonous charm. Under the rules of a strict building code, everything has to be adobe, or at least appear to be. So the local Safeway and J. C. Penney are passably disguised in dung-colored hue. Unlike most of the surrounding towns, including the now-desecrated Taos, and indeed most of the West, Santa Fe has not engaged in self-mutilation. Like Jerusalem, which lies in a similar natural setting, the place has an architectural unity. Nothing stands out; the whole, not the parts, is what counts.

SANTA FE feels eternal—actually the place is some four hundred years old—even though nowhere could be more trendy. And it is the trendiness that has drawn the crowds and the new Sun Belt money. Hollywood personalities such as Neil Simon and Texas influence-mongers like John Connally have recently bought homes. What attracts people like these is not so much John Ehrlichman, Santa Fe's leading *romancier*, as the town's general air of artiness. It may be the only town in America with more weavers, painters, and potters than blue-collar workers. It is certainly easier to buy a stained-glass window than to have your carburetor fixed. There are more art galleries than grocery stores, bars, haberdasheries, and laundries combined. The artwork seems to consist mostly of noble Indians mounted on white steeds against purple sunsets. But New York and Los Angeles have also discovered Santa Fe—discovered that there is big money there—and the latest styles from 57th Street and Santa Monica Boulevard can be seen on the town's gallery row: Canyon Road.

WHERE THERE is money there are artists and art entrepreneurs, and where artists gather, restless money soon follows. In Santa Fe the charming mud houses that sold three years ago for $25,000 now fetch $100,000 and up. A pleasant two-bedroom condo, sheathed in mud, of course, goes for a cool quarter of a million. Several mud houses have recently sold for more than a million. One could strike a better deal on Park Avenue, and for the price of a shack in Sante Fe own a mansion in Buffalo. But that is not the point. Santa Fe is where it's happening. The dusty central plaza, the focal point of the town, provides graphic evidence. The shoe repair shop has become a boutique; the laundry an art gallery. Indians squatting on blankets in front of the governor's palace selling their pots and bracelets still provide local color, but the Woolworth's across the plaza, it is rumored, will soon become a Neiman-Marcus. Santa Fe is clearly becoming Aspenized. The money that made that Colorado ski town the slalom of chic, also made it too expensive for any working person to live there. Today in Santa Fe, blue-collar workers and artisans with blue-collar incomes have been pushed into the mobile homes of neighboring towns like Espanola, where Spanish mission architecture has given way to Kentucky Fried Chicken contemporary. Maybe the tide is irreversible, for there is a lot in Santa Fe to attract even more money: the incomparable scenery, the hip but low-key atmosphere, the swimming and tennis in the summer and the skiing in the winter, the titillation of poets and painters, the Indians for backdrop, and, for two months every summer, the Santa Fe Opera. Housed in a magnificent amphitheater on a peak a few miles north of town, the opera mounts productions rivaling major companies. There, in a crowd where blue jeans and double-knits mingle amiably with tuxedos and diamonds, I saw a magnificent performance of *Figaro* and a brave resurrection of a late Strauss: *Die Liebe der Danae*.

AS ONE BASKS in the communal hot-tub in the open-air Japanese bathhouse, watching the sun go down behind the purple mountains, chatting amiably with one's fellow-soakers about their horoscopes and favorite mountain trails, the rest of the world seems very far away. When the local daily paper is little more than a glorified shopper's guide, it is hard to muster up much indignation over Reagan's budget deficit or the fortunes of the PLO. Santa Fe is a dream. A dream of artists who go in search of big bucks. Of big bucks in search of artists. Of gentle, often well-educated people in their twenties and thirties who come to find whatever work they can and often house-sit for the rich people who use their gilded adobes only a few weeks a year. They come, and they linger, because Santa Fe is, as they rightly say, mellow. But it is not so mellow as it once was. The gilded houses of the absent rich are periodically ransacked by burglars. The Chicano poor resent the rich Anglo newcomers who have jacked up prices without providing employment. The bishop of Santa Fe was recently robbed and murdered by someone who had lured him to a remote village on the pretext of giving final rites. In Santa Fe today there is too much money in search of real estate, and of powders to sniff up jaded noses. Over the years Santa Fe has survived drought, racial tension, and tourists. But its special charm has rested on its physical remoteness and its curious balance among Indians, Chicanos, and eccentric, artsy-craftsy gringos. Whether it can survive the private je the tax shelter, and *quiche à l'oignon* is question that increasingly troubles th tranquillity of this mellow Shangri-la.

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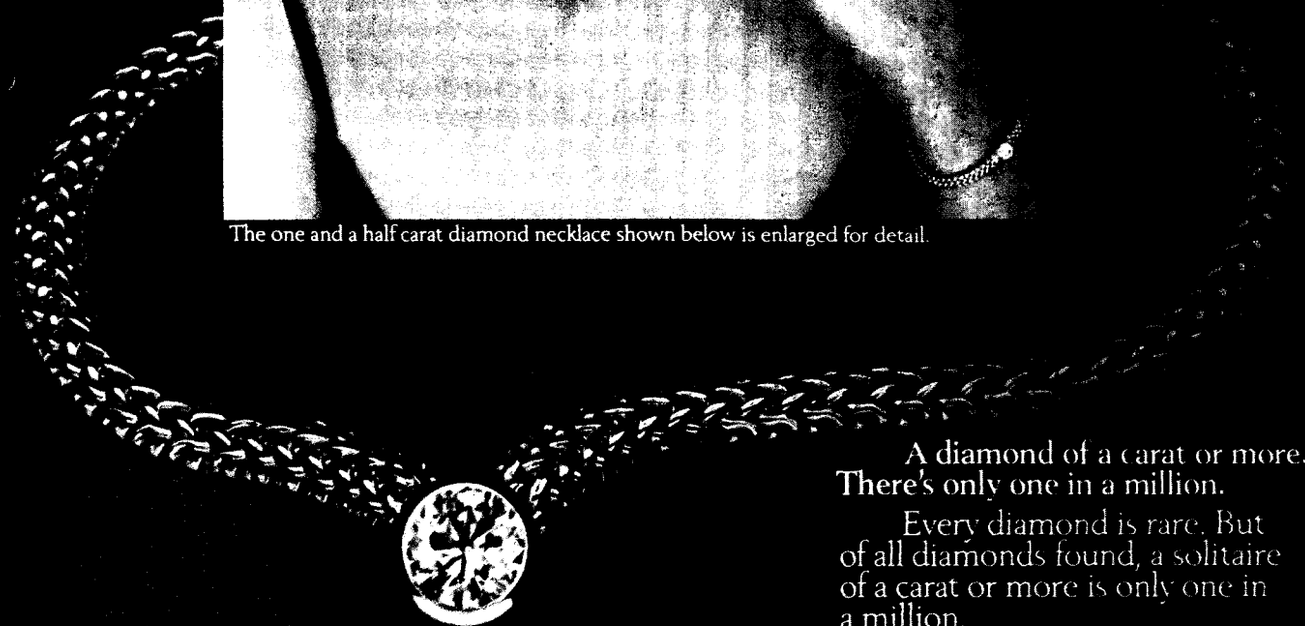

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